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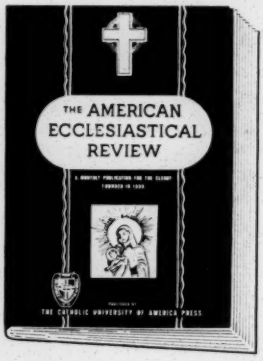

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THE AMERICAN ECCLESIASTICAL REVIEW

620 Michigan Ave., N.E. **Washington 17, D. C.**

THE JEFFERSON BIBLE

Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence and third President of the United States, was characterized by some of his contemporaries as "the arch-apostle of the cause of irreligion and freethought."[1] Even impartial historians are forced to conclude that he had "deistic leanings,"[2] and that his friendship with notorious infidels like Thomas Paine did "much to propagate deistic views" in the early years of the American Republic.[3] However, there is another side to Jefferson's character which is not so well known as the negative one of his antipathy to organized religion. Whatever else may be said in his favor, it must be admitted that he had a reverence and respect for the person and teachings of Jesus Christ which according to his limited vision he tried to put into practice. The purpose of this study will not be to prove that Jefferson was a Christian, or that he was not a deist. It will only be to present a piece of historical evidence which should indicate that the full Jefferson portrait has not yet been painted, at least on the side of his religious beliefs. There is no need to point out how important is a just estimate of Jefferson in this matter, since much of the present-day controversy in America over the relations of Church and State revolves around the pivotal question of what our Founding Fathers intended to legislate on the subject of religion; and their intention, it is safe to say, was an expression of their own religious convictions.

HISTORY OF THE JEFFERSON BIBLE

The so-called Jefferson Bible, or more accurately, *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth*, is now the property of the United States National Museum at Washington, having been obtained by purchase in 1895. It is a small folio booklet, some 8 by 4 inches in area and one inch thick. There are 83 leaves to the book, which is bound in red leather, and on the title page, in Jefferson's handwriting, is the caption, "The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth,

[1] E. Stiles, *Literary Diary*, edited by F. B. Dexter (New York, 1901), III, 125.

[2] Herbert M. Morais, *Deism in Eighteenth Century America* (New York, 1934), p. 117.

[3] John Orr, *English Deism: Its Roots and its Fruits* (Grand Rapids, 1934), p. 216.

Extracted Textually from the Gospels in Greek, Latin, French and English." Except for two maps of Palestine and Asia Minor, which are inserted among the leaves, the whole volume is a compilation of four parallel columns of Gospel texts, two to a page, in the four languages mentioned in the title. The texts are not written but were cut out of printed copies of Greek, Latin, French and English Testaments and pasted in this book of blank pages.

It is not certain exactly when Jefferson composed this collection of the sayings of Jesus. The closest estimate is the winter of 1816-17, or about nine years before his death. From his correspondence, however, we know that he had been thinking about the project as early as 1803. In a letter which he wrote to the chemist, Joseph Priestley, he congratulated the latter for his comparative review of Socrates and Jesus, adding that in his opinion the Gospels contained much extraneous matter. By careful pruning, he thought a selection could be made of those sayings which were absolutely the words of Jesus Himself.[4] A week later he wrote a friend that he considered "the moral precepts of Jesus as more pure, correct and sublime than those of the ancient philosophers."[5] On April 21, 1803, he wrote to Dr. Rush, a physician and sincere Christian, sending him the syllabus of an evaluation of the doctrines of Christ compared with those of other great teachers. Secretive by nature, Jefferson explained that he was sending this for his own eye and indicated its confidential character:

> In confiding it to you, I know it will not be exposed to the malignant perversions of those who make every word from me a text for new misrepresentations and calumnies. I am, moreover, averse to the communication of my religious tenets to the public, because it would countenance the presumption of those who have endeavoured to draw them before that tribunal, and to seduce public opinion to erect itself into that inquest over the rights of conscience, which the laws have so justly proscribed. It behooves every man who values liberty of conscience for himself to resist invasions of it in the case of others, or their case may, by change of circumstances, become his own.[6]

---

[4] Quoted by Cyrus Adler in the Introduction to *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth* (Washington, 1904), p. 12 (Letter dated April 9, 1803).

[5] *Ibid.* Letter to Edward Dowse, April 19, 1803.

[6] Adrienne Koch and William Peden, *The Life and Selected Writings of Thomas Jefferson* (New York, 1944), pp. 567-68. This letter with the

Late in January of the following year, Jefferson wrote to Priestly from Washington, how pleased he was to hear he had undertaken to make a detailed study of the doctrines of Jesus compared with those of the ancient philosophers:

> I think you cannot avoid giving, as preliminary to the comparison, a digest of his moral doctrines, extracted in his own words from the Evangelists, and leaving out everything relative to his personal history and character. It would be short and precious. With a view to do this for my own satisfaction, I had sent to Philadelphia to get two testaments (Greek) of the same edition, and two English, with a design to cut out the morsels of morality, and paste them on the leaves of a book, in the maner you describe as having been pursued in forming your Harmony. But I shall now get the thing done by better hands.[7]

This is the first clear statement of Jefferson that he planned to prepare such a book, which he decided at the time not to do himself but to have Priestley compose. But Priestley died in the same year (1804), and so the project was not carried into effect. Finally in 1813, John Quincy Adams prevailed upon Jefferson to compose the work which he had handed over to Priestley, and sent to the ex-President all of Priestley's unfinished drafts, saying that he did so because "I wish it may stimulate you."[8]

Writing to Adams from Monticello, Oct. 12, 1813, Jefferson gives a description of the proposed volume as follows:

> We must reduce our volume to the simple Evangelists, select, even from them, the very words only of Jesus, paring off the amphiboligisms

---

enclosed syllabus on the Life of Christ is the most detailed exposition extant on Jefferson's religious beliefs. In separate sections he analyzes the doctrines of Christ, first negatively for their defects and then positively for their merits. On the debit side, he finds five "disadvantages":

(1) Like Socrates, Christ wrote nothing himself.
(2) The biographers of Jesus were unlettered men.
(3) Jesus preached for only three years.
(4) His doctrines are mostly fragmentary.
(5) Followers of Christ have disfigured his doctrines.

On the credit side, he lists these good qualities:

(1) Jesus corrected and purified the monotheism of the Jews.
(2) His moral doctrine is purer than anything in paganism.
(3) His philosophy penetrated to the heart and will of man.
(4) He taught a future life as an incentive to moral conduct.

[7] *The Life ond Morals of Jesus,* p. 13 (Letter dated Jan. 29, 1804).
[8] *Ibid.,* p. 14.

into which they have been led, by forgetting often, or not understanding, what had fallen from him, by giving their own misconceptions as his dicta, and expressing unintelligibly for others what they had not understood themselves. There will be found remaining the most sublime and benevolent code of morals which has ever been offered to man. I have performed this operation for my own use, by cutting verse by verse out of the printed book, and arranging the matter which is evidently his and which is as easily distinguished as diamonds in a dunghill. The result is an octavo of forty-six pages.[9]

From this it would seem that Jefferson made two such books, one a volume of 46 pages, and the other an enlargement which has come down to us as the Jefferson Bible.

Under date of Jan. 29, 1815, he confided in a letter to Charles Clay that he had finished making the extracts from the four Gospels: "Probably you have heard me say I had taken the four Evangelists, had cut out from them every text they had recorded of the moral precepts of Jesus, and arranged them in a certain order, and although they appeared but as fragments, yet fragments of the most sublime edifice of morality which had ever been exhibited to man."[10]

Consistent with his previous intention, in this letter Jefferson declares he does not wish to publish the compilation, saying: "I not only write nothing on religion, but rarely permit myself to speak on it."[11]

More revealing still is Jefferson's letter to Charles Thompson, in commenting on Thompson's interest in the moral teachings of Jesus Christ:

I, too, have made a wee little book from the same materials, which I call the Philosophy of Jesus; it is a paradigma of his doctrines, made by cutting the texts out of the book, and arranging them on the pages

[9] Koch and Peden, *op. cit.*, p. 632. In this letter we have a good sample of Jefferson's vague knowledge of early Christianity. His plan is to find for himself the "pure and unsophisticated doctrines" of the "unlettered Apostles, the Apostolic Fathers and the Christians of the first century." Those who came after them, he calls "their Platonizing successors" who, "in order to legitimate the corruptions which they had incorporated into the doctrines of Jesus, found it necessary to disavow the primitive Christians" whom they excommunicated "as heretics, branding them with the opprobrious name of Ebionites or Beggars" (*ibid.*).

[10] *The Life and Morals of Jesus*, p. 15.

[11] *Ibid.*

of a blank book, in a certain order of time or subject. A more beautiful or precious morsel of ethics I have never seen; it is document in proof that *I* am a *real Christian*, that is to say, a disciple of the doctrines of Jesus.[12]

Towards the end of the letter, Jefferson makes a statement which suggests that he is not describing the volume now in the National Museum, but the preliminary one of 46 pages, for he says: "If I had time I would add to my little book the Greek, Latin and French texts, in columns side by side."[13]

Later in the same year, in a letter to a certain Vanderkemp, Jefferson gives further details as to how he made this preliminary volume. After explaining how careful he was that the syllabus should not get out in connection with his name, being unwilling to draw on himself "a swarm of insects, whose buzzing is more disquieting than their bite," he continued:

I made, for my own satisfaction, an extract from the Evangelists of the text of His morals, selecting those only whose style and spirit proved them genuine, and his own. . . . It was too hastily done, however, being the work of one or two evenings only, while I lived at Washington, overwhelmed with other business, and it is my intention to go over it again at more leisure. This shall be the work of the ensuing winter.[14]

Vanderkemp was himself publishing a book in the near future, and inquired of Jefferson if he might incorporate into it the latter's syllabus from the Gospels. Jefferson agreed with the following proviso: "I ask only one condition, that no possibility shall be admitted of my name being even intimated with the publication."[15]

Three years later, Jefferson was still planning to expand his Gospel collection into something more substantial. This is the last reference in his published and manuscript writings to the "Morals of Jesus." He wrote from Monticello to William Short: "The last I attempted too hastily some 12 or 15 years ago. It was the work of 2 or 3 nights only, at Washintgon, after getting through the evening task of reading the letters and papers of the day."[16]

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] Koch and Peden, *op. cit.*, p. 695. Before coming to describe his syllabus, Jefferson rapidly characterizes all the great thinkers of antiquity in a passage which is worth quoting:

As previously stated, the larger syllabus of 83 leaves was composed some time in 1816 or 1817. The earlier compilation of parallel texts in English only is last known to have been in the possession of his grandson, Thomas Jefferson Randolph. A remarkable fact is the secrecy in which Jefferson managed to keep both collections of the sayings of Jesus. Neither syllabus was known to his grandchildren until after Jefferson's death when they inherited his papers. It was then also for the first time they learned that he was in the habit of reading from these extracts every night before going to bed.

The subsequent history of the larger collection is briefly told. The National Government had purchased Jefferson's papers and had published an edition of his writings. Public interest was expressed particularly in the "Bible of Thomas Jefferson" after it came into the possession of the United States National Museum, and it was in consequence of this interest that the Fifty-seventh Congress in its first session passed the following resolution:

> That there be printed and bound, by photo-lithographic process, with an introduction of not to exceed twenty-five pages, to be prepared by Dr. Cyrus Adler, Librarian of the Smithsonian Institution, for the use of Congress, 9,000 copies of Thomas Jefferson's *Morals of Jesus of Nazareth,* as the same appears in the National Museum; 3,000 copies for the use of the Senate and 6,000 copies for the use of the House.[17]

"Epictetus has given us what was good of the Stoics; all beyond, of their dogmas, being hypocrisy and grimace. . . . Cicero [was] diffuse, vapid, rhetorical, but enchanting. His prototype, Plato, eloquent as himself, dealing out mysticisms incomprehensible to the human mind, has been deified by certain sects usurping the name of Christians. . . . Of Socrates we have nothing genuine but in the Memorabilia of Xenophon. . . . Seneca is indeed a fine moralist, disfiguring his work at times with some Stoicisms. . . . But the greatest of all the reformers of the depraved religion of His own country, was Jesus of Nazareth. Abstracting what is really His from the rubbish in which it is buried . . . we have the outlines of a system of the most sublime morality which has ever fallen from the lips of man. Epictetus and Epicurus give laws for governing ourselves, Jesus a supplement of the duties and charities we owe to others. The establishment of the innocent and genuine character of this benevolent Moralist . . . would effect a quiet euthanasia of the heresies of bigotry and fanaticism which have so long triumphed over human reason" (*ibid.*, p. 694).

[17] *The Life and Morals of Jesus,* p. 19.

CONTENTS OF THE JEFFERSON BIBLE

The photo-lithographic copy of the Jefferson Bible as printed by Congress has two main sections, following a 19-page introduction. The first is a Table of Contents, written long-hand in ink by Jefferson himself, followed by the inserted clippings from the four New Testaments as described above. Before evaluating the selections themselves, it will be worthwhile to transcribe the entire Table of Contents, thus allowing the reader to get a bird's eye view, as it were, of Jefferson's "profession of faith." The transcription here given will cover all the details of the original, including spelling, abbreviations, numeration and corrections:[18]

[Narrative]
A Table of the Texts [of this Extract]
employed in this Narrative
from the Evangelists and of the order of their arrangement

Page

1. Luke 2. 1-7. Joseph & Mary go to Bethlehem where Jesus is born.
   21, 39. he is circumcised & named & they return to Nazareth.
   40, 42-48, 51, 52. at 12 years of age he accompanies his parents to Jerusalem and returns.
2. L. 3. 1-2. Mk. 1. 4. Mt. 3. 4, 5, 6. John baptizes in Jordan.
   Mt. 3. 13. Jesus is baptized. L. 3. 23. at 30 years of age.
3. J. 2. 12-16. drives the traders out of the temple.
   J. 3. 22. Mt. 4. 12. Mk. 6. 17-28. he baptizes but returns into Galilee on the death of John.
4. Mk. 1. 21-22. he teaches in the Synagogues.
5. Mt. 12. 1-5, 9-12. Mk. 2. 27. Mt. 12. 14-15. explains the Sabbath.
   L. 6. 12-17. call of his disciples.

6 to 15 Mt. 5. 1-12. L. 6. 24-26. Mt. 5. 13-47. L. 6. 34-36. Mt. 6. 1-34. Mt. 7. 1-2. L. 6. 30. Mt. 7. 3-20. 12. 35-37. 7. 24-29. The Sermon in the Mount. Mt. 8. 1. Mk. 6. 6. Mt. 11. 28-30. exhorts.

16. L. 7. 36-36. a woman anointeth him.
17. Mk. 3. 31-35. L. 12. 1-7, 13-15. precepts.
18. L. 12. 16-21. parable of the rich man.
    22-48. 54, 59. L. 13. 1-5. precepts.

[18] Jefferson's script is fairly large, easily legible and clearly reproduced in the photographic copy. In the heading immediately below, the words in brackets are crossed out in Jefferson's original copy.

21. L. 13. 6-9. parable of the fig tree.
22. L. 11. 37-46, 52-54. precepts.
23. Mt. 13. 1-9. Mk. 4. 10. Mt. 13. 18-23. parable of the Sower.
24.25 Mk. 4. 21-23. precepts. Mt. 13. 24-30, 36-52. parable of the tares.
26.27 Mk. 4. 26-34. L. 9. 57-62. L. 5. 27-29. Mk. 2. 15-17. precepts.
L. 5. 36-38. parable of new wine in old bottles.
28. Mt. 13. 53-57. a prophet hath no honor in his own country.
29. Mt. 9. 36. Mk. 6. 7. Mt. 10. 5-6, 9-18, 23, 26-31. Mk. 6. 12, 30. mission, instruction, return of Apostles.
30.31 J. 7. 1. Mk. 7. 1-15, 14-24. Mt. 18. 1-4, 7-9, 12-17, 21-22. precepts.
32.33. Mt. 18. 23-35. parable of the wicked servant.
34. L. 10. 1-8, 10-12. mission of the LXX.
35. J. 7. 2-16, 19-26, 32, 43-53. the feast of the tabernacles.
36. J. 8. 1-11. the woman taken in adultery.
37. J. 9. 1-3. to be born blind no proof of sin.
J. 10. 1-5, 11-14, 16. the good shepherd.
38. L. 10. 25-37. love god and thy neighbor. parable of the Samaritan.
39. L. 11. 1-13. form of prayer.
40. L. 14. 1-6. the Sabbath.
41. 7-24. the bidden to a feast.
42. 28-32. precepts.
43.44. L. 15. 1-32. parables of the lost sheep and Prodigal son.
45. L. 16. 1-15. parable of the unjust steward.
46. 18-31. parable of Lazarus.
48. L. 17. 1-4, 7-10, 20, 26-36. precepts to be always ready.
49. L. 18. 1-14. parables of the widow and judge, the Pharisee & Publican.
50.51. L. 10. 38-42. Mt. 19. 1-26. precepts.
52. Mt. 20. 1-16. parable of the laborers in the vineyard.
54. L. 19. 1-28. Zaccheus, & the parable of the talents.
56. Mt. 21. 1-3, 6-8, 10. J. 12. 19-24. Mt. 21. 17. goes to Jerusalem & Bethany
Mk. 11. 12, 15-19. the traders cast out from the temple.
Mk. 11. 27. Mt. 21. 27-31. parable of the two sons.
57. Mt. 21. 33. Mk. 12. 1-9. Mt. 21. 45-46. parable of the vineyard & husbandman.
58. Mt. 22. 1-14. parable of the king and wedding.
59. 15-33. tribute, marriage, resurrection.
60. Mk. 12. 18-31. Mt. 22. 40. Mk. 12. 32-33. the two commandments.
61.62. Mt. 23. 1-33. precepts, pride, hypocrisy, swearing.
63. Mk. 12. 41-44. the widow's mite.

64. Mt. 24. 1-2, 16-21, 32-33, 36-39, 40-44. Jerusalem & the day of judgment.
45-51. the faithful and wise servant.
65. Mt. 25. 1-13. parable of the ten virgins.
66. 14-30. parable of the talents.
67.68. L. 21. 34-36. Mt. 25. 31-46. the day of judgment.
69. Mk. 14. 1-8. a woman anointeth him.
Mt. 26. 14-16. Judas undertakes to point out Jesus.
70.71. 17-20. L. 22. 24-27. J. 13. 2, 4-17, 21-26, 31, 34-45, Mt. 26. 31-33. washes their feet.
72. L. 22. 33-34. Mt. 26. 35-45. precepts to his disciples, washes their feet, trouble of mind and prayer.
73. J. 18. 1-3. Mt. 26. 48-50. Judas conducts the officers to Jesus.
74. J. 18. 4-8. Mt. 26. 50-52, 55-56. Mk. 14. 51-52. Mt. 26. 57. J. 18. 15-16, 17.
75. J. 18. 25-27. Mt. 26. 75. J. 18. 19-23. Mk. 14. 55-61. L. 22. 67-68, 70. Mk. 14. 63-65. he is arrested & carried before Caiphas the Highpriest & is condemned.
76. J. 18. 28-31, 33-38. L. 23. 5. Mt. 27. 13. is then carried to Pilate.
77. L. 23. 6-12. who sends him to Herod.
78. L. 23. 13-16. Mt. 27. 15-23, 26. receives him back, scourges and delivers him to execution.
79.80. Mt. 27. 27, 29-31, 3-8. L. 23. 26-32. J. 19. 17-24. Mt. 27. 39-43.
81. L. 23. 39-41, 34. J. 19. 25-27. Mt. 27. 46-50, 55-56. his crucifixion, death and burial.
82. J. 19. 31-34, 38-42. Mt. 27. 60. his burial.

Following this Table of Contents are a number of blank pages, seven to be exact; these in turn followed by a full page title, in long hand, which reads: "The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth Extracted Textually from the Gospels in Greek, Latin, French and English."

Next come the two folded maps previously referred to, cut out of a book, with the printed numbers "1" and "414" on each, respectively. Then begin the inserted extracts, roughly ten to fourteen verses per column, down page, with two columns to a page. The first three columns are in small print, the fourth in English is large type. Marked along the right hand margin are the chapters, Mt. 8, L. 19, etc., from which the corresponding verses were drawn. Occasional errors of placement are the only blemish in an otherwise scrupulously neat-looking compilation.

All told there are exactly 990 verses extracted and collected in the brochure. Most of them are from the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke; very few from St. John, although the Joannine selections are noteworthy. For example: Jesus driving the traffickers out of the temple, the Parable of the Good Shepherd, Judas' betrayal of Christ, Trial of Christ before the Highpriest, and Peter's denial of Christ.

In accordance with his plan to give extracts from the life and morals of Jesus, Jefferson simply eliminated everything in the Gospels which involves what are technically called strict mysteries, as well as all comments of the Evangelists on the doctrines of Christ. Thus every reference to the Divinity of Christ, Baptism, the Eucharist, and the Primacy is omitted. For this reason also the fourth Gospel is practically ignored. Not a single miracle of Christ is listed; so much so that where a moral precept occurs in a miraculous context, the precept will be cut out of its setting, verses skipped if necessary, in order to avoid quoting a miraculous event. To illustrate this prejudice against miracles, we may examine what Jefferson does when he quotes the long instruction of Christ regarding divorce, recorded in the first Gospel. Verses 1 to 3 of chapter 19 in Matthew, which begin the instruction, read as follows in the full text:

> And it came to pass that when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan.
>
> And great multitudes followed him, *and he cured them there.*
>
> The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him: Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?[19]

Jefferson quotes these verses in sequence, and beyond them to verse 26 inclusive. Yet out of all these twenty-six verses, he

[19] *The Life and Morals of Jesus,* leaf 50. Whatever else may be said about Jefferson's religious ideas, there is no doubt that he repudiated anything that was formally supernatural. In the letter to William Short quoted above, in referring to the "artificial systems" which have been built upon the doctrines of Christ, Jefferson adds a footnote illustrating what this "artificiality" consists in. He says: "E.g. The immaculate conception of Jesus, His deification, the creation of the world by Him, His miraculous powers, His resurrection and visible ascension, His corporeal presence in the Eucharist, the Trinity, original sin, atonement, regeneration, election, orders of Hierarchy, etc." (Koch and Pedan, *op. cit.,* p. 694).

cut out of the printed English text just five words, italicized above in verse 2, namely, ". . . and he cured them there."[20] In the Greek, the words excised with a knife and a blank left are . . . *καί ἐθεράπευσεν αὐτοὺς ἐκεῖ*, with corresponding blanks also in the Latin and French versions.

The same sort of excision is found throughout the collection, not only with regard to the miracles of Christ but in every case where reference is made to the supernatural life or to supernatural means of sanctification. To take only one example each from the other three Gospels, St. Mark in the first chapter, verse 4, relates that: "John did baptize in the wilderness *and preached a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.*" Jefferson carefully cut out the italicized portion.[21] St. Luke in the second chapter describes the return of Jesus from Jerusalem to Nazareth at the age of twelve, saying, "And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them; *and his mother kept all these things carefully in her heart.* And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature *and grace before God and men.*" Again the italicized phrases are deleted.[22] In the Gospel according to St. John, the Evangelist begins the narrative of the Last Supper with the words: "And supper being ended, *the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come forth from God and was going to God,* he riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel and girded himself." The whole center portion of the narrative is excised.[23]

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE JEFFERSON BIBLE

In order to appreciate the importance of the Jefferson Bible certain items should be called to mind. The weight of historical evidence "is abundant to prove Jefferson a deist who shared the views and attitudes in matters of religion that were common to the English deists" of his day.[24] Unfortunately the term "deist"

[20] In this and the other examples cited, the parts of the text retained by Jefferson are taken from his own version of the Gospels; the missing texts which are supplied are from the Confraternity translation of the New Testament.

[21] *The Life and Morals of Jesus*, leaf 2. [22] *Ibid.*

[23] *Ibid.*, leaf 70. [24] Orr, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-12.

has been used so indiscriminately by secular historians that it is hard to know just what it means in a particular context, and here as applied to Jefferson. On the one hand epithets like "infidel," "atheist," and "materialist" leveled at him by the colonial clergy are suspect because they were used by his personal enemies.[25] On the other hand there are so many incriminating statements in Jefferson's writings, especially his letters, that an unbiased reader is led to conclude that if the Sage of Monticello was not an infidel, he was only a shade removed from infidelity. For instance, the following communication to John Adams seems to bear out Jefferson's own confession that, "I am a materialist."[26] He writes:

> I feel bodies which are not myself: there are other existences then. I call them *matter*. I feel them changing place. This gives me *motion*. Where there is an absence of matter, I call it *void*, or *nothing*, or *immaterial space*. On the basis of sensation, of matter and motion, we may erect the fabric of all the certainties we can have or need.
>
> When once we quit the basis of sensation, all is in the wind. To talk of *immaterial* existences, is to talk of *nothing*. To say that the human soul, angels, God, are immaterial, is to say, they are *nothings*, or to say that there is no God, no angels, no soul. I cannot reason otherwise: but I believe I am supported in my creed of materialism by the Lockes, the Tracys and the Stewarts.[27]

The question is, how are these damaging confessions to be understood? Was Jefferson an atheist not only nominally but really? And if only nominally, what proof do we have that in real life he admitted the existence of a personal God in spite of the bizarre speculations he put on paper when trying to philosophize on his religious beliefs? It is the writer's opinion that the *Morals of Jesus* or the Jefferson Bible give us the key to the prob-

[25] *Ibid.*

[26] Quoted in Gilbert Chinard, *Thomas Jefferson, The Apostle of Americanism* (Boston, 1948), who says: ". . . one might easily be misled by some declarations of Jefferson to his more intimate friends. 'I am a materialist—I am an Epicurian,' he wrote on several instances to John Adams, Thomas Cooper and Short, with whom he felt that he could discuss religious questions more freely than with any others" (p. 521).

[27] Koch and Peden, *op. cit.*, pp. 700-701. Letter is dated Aug. 15, 1820, and has the following footnote, with reference to the "heresy of immaterialism" brought into the teachings of Jesus by the Christian Church: "That of Athanasius and the Council of Nicea, anno 324" (p. 701).

lem, proving that its author was not an infidel but a deist, in the sense of one who rejects the need of divine revelation and consequently repudiates any form of established religion, beyond the limits of independent human reason and will.

That Jefferson believed in God is evident first from his ready acceptance of the teachings of Christ on the subject, the Lord's Prayer, the Eight Beatitudes, the Parables of the Unjust Steward and the Ten Talents, the Sermon on the Mount—all of which presuppose a belief in the existence of God, the Creator of heaven and earth. Correlative with this goes the belief in prayer and some kind of Providence, and to that extent, at least, an acceptance of some kind of grace, requested for example in the petition, "Deliver us from evil," in the *Pater Noster*.[28]

Also the *Morals of Jesus* allows us to conclude that Jefferson believed in some sort of future life, where the good are rewarded and the wicked punished. Besides the Parables of Lazarus and Dives, of the Pharisee and Publican, and the Wedding Feast, Jefferson accepted and extracted the whole discourse of Christ about the Day of Judgment, in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, not excluding the classic verse 46, in which Christ foretells: "These will go into everlasting punishment, but the just into everlasting life."

The need for the practice of virtue and the duty to avoid sin are equally subscribed to by Jefferson on almost every page of the Extracts. Apart from the very title, *The Life and Morals of Jesus*, it is noteworthy that practically every selection in the anthology has to do directly with the observance of the command-

[28] Some of Jefferson's strictures on the Deity may be explained by his violent reaction to the Calvinism of his early days. Shortly before his death he wrote to John Adams:

"I can never join Calvin in addressing *his God*. He was indeed an atheist, which I can never be; or rather his religion was daemonism. If ever man worshiped a false God, he did. The being described in his five points, is not the God whom you and I acknowledge and adore, the Creator and benevolent Governor of the world; but a daemon of malignant spirit. It would be more pardonable to believe in no God at all, than to blaspheme Him by the atrocious attributes of Calvin. Indeed, I think that every Christian sect gives a great handle to atheism by their general dogma, that, without a revelation, there would not be sufficient proof of the being of a God" (Koch and Peden, *op. cit.*, pp. 705-706 [Letter dated April 11, 1823]).

ments of God. The Sermon on the Mount is typical. Moreover, the single word "precepts" occurs ten times in the short Table of Contents; and the following sins are mentioned by name in the same index: adultery, injustice, avarice, pride, hypocrisy and swearing. On the side of virtue, the double precept of the love of God and the neighbor is referred to twice, apparently the only case of duplication in the syllabus; it is also the only case in which Jefferson quoted parallel passages from all three Synoptics, bearing on a single precept of Christ.

A complete analysis of the *Morals of Jesus* would extend to a volume. And the analysis should be made. For our purpose it is enough to have seen at some length the contents of this unusual collection of New Testament extracts, and briefly reviewed its history and theological importance. However, one question still remains to be answered. What are we to make of Jefferson's apparent profession of materialism, quoted above, and referred to elsewhere in his writings? The answer lies in a closer examination of the context in which these claims to believe in matter only were made. Writers on colonial history have not always examined this context, with consequent injustice done to the author of such statements. For example, in his letter to Adams, it is true that Jefferson speaks of "my creed of materialism." But what does he mean? He can only mean the "materialism" professed by John Locke and the other writers mentioned. Yet we know that Locke was not a materialist, though he did say that *reason alone* is scarcely able to decide for or against the materiality of the soul.[29] He denied, however, any intention to undermine *belief* in the spirituality of the soul. In other words, while he held on faith that the soul was not material, he did not see his way clear to proving its immateriality.[30]

In the same context, Jefferson naively appeals to the Fathers of the Church as witnesses to the materiality of God: "Jesus told us, 'God is Spirit,' but He has not defined what a spirit is, nor

[29] *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, London, (no date), Bk. IV, Chap. III, no. 6, where Locke says: "He who will give himself leave to consider freely, and look into the dark and intricate part of each hypothesis, will scarce find his reason able to determine him fixedly for or against the soul's materiality" (p. 442).

[30] *Ibid.*

said that it is not *matter*. And the ancient fathers generally, of the first three cenutries, held it to be matter light and thin indeed, an etherial gas; but still matter."[31] Jefferson was certainly wrong in supposing that the Fathers attributed any materiality to God. But he was right in saying that many of them held spirit "to be matter, light and thin." Not a few, for example, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Jerome, Hilary and Origen believed that finite spirits required a body as a principle of individuation and limitation. Even in Scholastic times, the degree of immateriality that belongs to finite spirits was disputed. Jefferson's error, therefore, lay in using a speculative opinion regarding finite spirits to explain the constitution of all reality, created and divine.

A correct estimate of Jefferson's attitude toward religion would be a valuable contribution to the history of Church and State relations in America. To do him justice, however, we should interpret his religious convictions not on the sole basis of his scattered statements where he is trying, and fails, to express himself properly on matters beyond his capacity, but in the light of the principles by which he guided his interior life and directed his personal relations with God. Among the extant writings of Thomas Jefferson, the *Morals of Jesus* is the best single source in which these principles are recorded.

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[31] Koch and Peden, *op. cit.*, p. 701.

THE ONE CHURCH

There has never been and there is not now more than one Church of Christ. Its mission, its constitution and its unity are divinely given and its duration is from the time of the Apostles until the end of the world. As St. Cyprian (200-258) said: "There is one God and one Christ and one Church and one chair founded by the voice of the Lord on Peter. Another altar cannot be established and a new priesthood cannot be instituted besides that one altar and one priesthood. Whoever gathers elsewhere, scatters."

—Edward Francis Hanahoe, S.A., in *Catholic Ecumenism* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1953), p. 51.

LAND OF MARY IMMACULATE

In the year 1846, on May 10, the Fourth Sunday after Easter, Archbishop Samuel Eccleston and twenty-two bishops of the United States were gathered in the city of Baltimore, in the Cathedral of the Assumption of Our Lady, for the opening of the First Session of the Sixth Provincial Council of Baltimore. Archbishop Eccleston offered up a Solemn Holy Mass, and Bishop Purcell of Cincinnati preached an appropriate sermon.

The ecclesiastical province of Baltimore at this time comprised the whole United States, and hence the Sixth Provincial Council was able to issue decrees for the entire country.

On May 13 the bishops of the United States who were gathered in the residence of the Archbishop and under his chairmanship for the third private meeting of the Council, which began at nine in the morning, adopted a decree by which they chose the Blessed Virgin Mary, conceived without sin, as Patroness of the United States.

This decree, translated from the Latin into English, is as follows:

> With enthusiastic acclaim and with unanimous approval and consent, the Fathers [of the Council] have chosen the Blessed Virgin Mary, conceived without sin, as the Patroness of the United States of America; without, however, adding the obligation of hearing Mass and abstaining from servile work on the feast of the Conception of Blessed Mary. And, therefore, they decided that the Supreme Pontiff be humbly asked to transfer the solemnity, unless the feast fall on a Sunday, to the nearest Sunday, on which both private and solemn Masses may be celebrated of the feast thus transferred, and the vesper office of the same feast may be recited.

Shea tells us that it was "to gratify a pious desire pervading the whole United States," that "the Fathers of the Council petitioned the Sovereign Pontiff to ratify their choice of the Blessed Virgin Mary, conceived without sin, as Patroness of the United States, and to transfer the solemnization of the feast to the following Sunday."[1]

[1] John Gilmary Shea, *History of the Catholic Church in the United States* (New York, 1886-92), IV, 28-30.

In the fourth private meeting of the Council, held on May 15, same time and same place, the bishops of the United States agreed to ask the Holy See for permission, in all the dioceses of the country, to add the word "Immaculate" in the orations and preface of the divine office and Mass of the Conception of Mary; and also to add in the Litany of the Blessed Virgin the invocation: "Queen, conceived without sin, pray for us."

The latter favors were granted first, by Pope Pius IX, in an audience on Sept. 13, 1846, and announced by the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda (to which the Church in the United States was subject at that time) in a decree published two days later. When the Sixth Provincial Council of Baltimore met the ruling Pontiff was Gregory XVI. He died on June 1 of that year, and was succeeded by Pius IX on June 16.

The choice of Our Lady in her Immaculate Conception as Patroness of the United States was approved by Pope Pius IX in an audience on Feb. 7, 1847; and this approval was announced in a decree of Propaganda dated July 2, the same year. Both of these decrees of Propaganda have the signature of Cardinal Fransoni.

Two more decrees, issued by the Congregation of Sacred Rites on April 10, 1848, answered questions which had arisen. (1) The Mass of the Immaculate Conception, transferred to Sunday, has the *Gloria* and *Credo* and the Gospel of the Sunday at the end; and, if the Mass is sung, it has a commemoration only of the Sunday; if it is a private Mass, it has commemorations also of other feasts observed on that day. (2) The obligation of reciting the vespers of the divine office is satisfied by attendance at the vespers of the Immaculate Conception on the Sunday to which the feast is transferred.

It will be of interest to list the bishops who signed the decree by which the Immaculate Conception was chosen Patroness of the United States. The first was, of course, that of Archbishop Samuel Eccleston of Baltimore, the chairman of the Council. Then followed the signatures of twenty-two bishops, three of whom were coadjutor bishops (Louisville, New York, and Boston), one an administrator (Detroit), and one a vicar apostolic (Texas). The twenty-two bishops signed their names in the following order:

(1) Michael Portier, Bishop of Mobile
(2) Francis Patrick Kenrick, Bishop of Philadelphia
(3) John Baptist Purcell, Bishop of Cincinnati
(4) Guido Ignatius Chabrat, Coadjutor of Louisville
(5) Anthony Blanc, Bishop of New Orleans
(6) Matthias Loras, Bishop of Dubuque
(7) John Hughes, Bishop of New York
(8) Richard Pius Miles, Bishop of Nashville
(9) Celestine Rene Lawrence Guynemer de la Hailandière, Bishop of Vincennes
(10) John Joseph Chanche, Bishop of Natchez
(11) Richard Vincent Whelan, Bishop of Richmond
(12) Peter Paul Lefevère, Administrator of Detroit
(13) Peter Richard Kenrick, Bishop of Saint Louis
(14) John Mary Odin, Vicar Apostolic of Texas
(15) Michael O'Connor, Bishop of Pittsburgh
(16) Andrew Byrne, Bishop of Little Rock
(17) William Quarter, Bishop of Chicago
(18) John McCloskey, Coadjutor of New York
(19) William Tyler, Bishop of Hartford
(20) Ignatius Aloysius Reynolds, Bishop of Charleston
(21) John Henni, Bishop of Milwaukee
(22) John Bernard Fitzpatrick, Coadjutor of Boston

The request of the American bishops for permission to add the word "Immaculate" in the orations and preface for the feast of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin requires some explanation. The feast of the Conception of Mary was celebrated in some places already in the thirteenth century; however, it did not clearly teach the Immaculate Conception. That was done in the Office "Sicut Lilium" and the Mass "Egredimini" of Leonard of Nogarolis, which was approved in 1477 by Sixtus IV; in fact, these had the same oration we have today for the feast of the Immaculate Conception. When Pius V revised the Roman Breviary in 1568, though the Franciscans were allowed to retain the Office and Mass of Nogarolis, this office was dropped for the rest of the Church and the office of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin was substituted, the word "Conception" being substituted for "Nativity."

When the American bishops asked for permission to add the word "Immaculate," they anticipated and perhaps influenced a

step taken by Pope Pius IX a year after he had granted the petition of the American bishops. On Sept. 30, 1847, this Pope authorized for the diocese of Rome a new office and Mass proper to the feast of the Immaculate Conception and clearly teaching the doctrine of Mary's Immaculate Conception; and, two years later, he extended the new office and Mass to the universal Church.

On Dec. 8, 1854, eight years and four months after the American bishops had chosen Mary Immaculate as the Patroness of the United States, Pope Pius IX solemnly declared the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary to be an article of faith. Numerous petitions for the definition of this doctrine had poured in during the preceding years; and Pope Pius IX had written the encyclical *Ubi primum* in which he asked the bishops of the world (1) how great the devotion of the faithful was toward the Immaculate Conception and how great their desire for the definition of this doctrine; and (2) what was the opinion and desire of the bishops themselves.

The American bishops, assembled in the Seventh Provincial Council of Baltimore, May 5-13, 1849, had given a favorable reply to both questions (in decrees I and II, on May 12), informing the Holy Father that the faithful in the United States were animated with a great devotion to the Immaculate Conception, and that they, the bishops, would be pleased if the Holy Father declared the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception an article of faith.

The documents in which are recorded all of the facts mentioned concerning the Sixth and Seventh Councils of Baltimore are contained in volume three of the so-called *Collectio Lacensis*, containing the acts and decrees of the Councils of the bishops of North America and Great Britain from 1789 to 1869, and published by Herder at Freiburg in Breisgau in 1875.

It is interesting to note that among these documents there is one which tells us that Bishop Carroll had chosen the Blessed Virgin as patroness of the diocese of Baltimore at the time he was made bishop. The document in question is the minutes of the fifth session, on November 10, of the Diocesan Synod of Baltimore held in 1791, which was really the first national synod of the United States.

Long before the American bishops, in 1846, chose the Immaculate Conception as Patroness of the United States, a large

portion of our country, namely that which has been called "Our Spanish Borderlands," had been placed under the patronage of Mary Immaculate.

It was in 1760 that Pope Clement XIII approved of the choice of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary as the principal and universal Patroness of Spain and its possessions; and that included Our Spanish Borderlands—the states of Florida, Georgia, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California.

Long before that, however, the Spaniards, both in their homeland and in their world-wide colonies, excelled all other nations and countries in their love and veneration of *Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción.* The flagship of Christopher Columbus on his epoch-making voyage across the Atlantic in 1492 was named not merely *Santa Maria,* but according to some historians *Santa Maria de Concepción.* To the second island he found in the New World, Columbus gave the name of *La Concepción,* after he had named the first *San Salvador.* From that time on, countless rivers, lakes, towns, missions in Hispanic America were named for and placed under the tutelage of *La Purísima Concepción.*

In our own Spanish Borderlands no less than ten missions were dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, four in Florida, two in Texas, two in New Mexico, and two in California. The two in New Mexico, at Hawikuh and Quarai, were the first; and one of those in Texas, Mission *La Purísima Concepción* near San Antonio, still stands today as it did when completed in 1762—the oldest church of the Immaculate Conception in the United States. The church adjoining the Franciscan friary at St. Augustine, Florida, founded in 1584 and dedicated to Mary Immaculate, was the first church of the Immaculate Conception in territory now a part of the United States.

As early as 1644 Pope Innocent X permitted the feast of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin to be made a holy day of obligation in Spain and its possessions, while it was only in 1708, under Clement XI, that the feast of the Conception of Mary became such for the whole Church.

In 1761, the year after the choice of the Immaculate Conception as Patroness of Spain had been approved by Clement XIII, Spain and its possessions also received permission to make use of the

office and Mass of the Immaculate Conception, which was then in use among the Franciscans and which clearly taught and praised Mary's singular privilege of the Immaculate Conception.

A further concession was made to Spain and its possessions in 1767, when this office and Mass of the Immaculate Conception were permitted, not merely on December 8, but on every Saturday of the year except during Advent and Lent.

A symbol as well as instance of Spain's devotion to Mary Immaculate are the beautiful paintings of the Immaculate Conception by the great Spanish artist, Bartolomé Estéban Murillo (1617-82). *El Maestro,* as Murillo is called, painted numerous pictures of the Immaculate Conception, the most famous of which is in the Louvre. It represents the Blessed Virgin surrounded by cherubs and standing upon the crescent, her hands folded on her breast and her eyes turned upwards. Similar to it is his famous painting of the Assumption, also in the Louvre.

The spirit of Murillo is indicated by the fact that he never began a religious painting without prayer and penance, and also by the practice of the pupils of the art school which he founded, who met with the salutation: "Praised be the Most Holy Sacrament and the pure Conception of Our Lady!"

The latter became, in fact, a favorite greeting and aspiration among Spaniards everywhere, particularly in the following form: "Alabado sea el Santísimo Sacramento del Altar! Bendita sea la Límpia y Purísima Concepción de Nuestra Señora Maria Santísima sin mancha de pecado original!—Praised be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar! Blessed be the stainless and most pure Conception of Our Lady Mary Most Holy without the taint of original sin!"

In all the missions of Our Spanish Borderlands the Indians were taught to sing the beautiful *Alabado* at services in the church, similarly as we sing the Psalm *Laudate* after Benediction, and also at other times. The first verse of the *Alabado* praised the Blessed Sacrament; the second, the Immaculate Conception; and the third, St. Joseph. The first two verses are as follows:

Alabado y ensalzado
Sea el Divino Sacramento,
En quien Dios oculto asiste,
De las Almas el sustento.

Y la límpia Concepción
De la Reina de los Cielos,
Que quedando Virgen Pura,
Es Madre del Verbo Eterno.

The following is a literal translation: "Praised and exalted be the Sacrament Divine in which God is present in a hidden manner and offers Himself as the food of souls! Praised also be the Immaculate Conception of the Queen of Heaven, who while remaining a pure virgin, became the Mother of the Eternal Word!" Fr. Owen da Silva's book, *Mission Music of California*, has the following version in verse:

Lift your heart in joy and exalt Him
In the Blessed Sacrament all Holy,
Where the Lord, His glory veiling,
Comforts souls true and lowly.

Laud the glorious Conception
Of the Queen in God's Kingdom supernal,
Who remaining Virgin stainless,
Bore for men the Word eternal.

There is another form of the *Alabado* which combines these two verses into one:

Alabado sea el Santísimo
Sacramento del altar,
Y la Virgen concebida
Sin pecado original.

And this followed by:

Ave, Ave,
Ave Maria!
Ave, Ave,
Ave Maria!

In 1846, therefore, when the bishops of the United States dedicated our land in a special manner to the Immaculate Conception, choosing the Blessed Virgin under this title as the special Patroness of our country, it was a re-dedication as far as that part was concerned which had once belonged to Spain—Our Spanish

Borderlands, which were placed under the patronage of Mary Immaculate already in 1760.

In his *History of Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary in North America,* MacLeod tells us that in 1862, of more than eight hundred churches in North America which were dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, 145 were named for the Immaculate Conception. Another count made by Fr. Maynard Geiger, O.F.M., in 1943, shows that out of 4,817 churches and institutions in the United States dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, 637 honor the Immaculate Conception.

The United States of America is indeed the land of Mary Immaculate. Very fittingly the beloved poet-priest of the South, Fr. Abram J. Ryan, wrote one of his most beautiful poems in Baltimore on the night of Dec. 8, 1880, opening with these verses:

Fell the snow on the festival's vigil
And surpliced the city in white;
I wonder who wove the pure flakelets?
Ask the Virgin, or God, or the night.

It fitted the Feast: 'twas a symbol,
And earth wore the surplice at morn,
As pure as the vale's stainless lily
For Mary, the sinlessly born;

For Mary, conceived in all sinlessness;
And the sun, thro' the clouds of the East,
With the brightest and fairest of flashes,
Fringed the surplice of white for the Feast.

And round the horizon hung cloudlets,
Pure stoles to be worn by the Feast;
While the earth and the heavens were waiting
For the beautiful Mass of the priest.

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CI RIESCE AND CARDINAL OTTAVIANI'S DISCOURSE

Some people, and even some Catholics, pretend that there is opposition between the allocution delivered by the Holy Father to the Union of Italian Catholic Jurists on Dec. 6, 1953, and the discourse given by His Eminence Cardinal Ottaviani at the Lateran University on March 2 of that same year, on the occasion of the anniversary of the Holy Father's elevation to the Pontificate.

Such a judgment deserves to be rejected immediately, since it is not only devoid of foundation, but also disrespectful.

At the very outset, it is to be noted that these two addresses deal with two different problems.

Cardinal Ottaviani dealt with the *Catholic* state, and with its duties towards religion in its own *internal* order. He was not discussing the case in which that Catholic state would join, under juridical bonds, a community of states, as, for example, that community of states which is the United States of America.

The religious problem taken up by the Holy Father has reference, on the other hand, to a juridical community into which "states, remaining sovereign, freely unite," and in which "depending upon the religious belief of the great majority of citizens, or by reason of an explicit declaration of law, peoples and member states of the international community will be divided into those that are Christian, non-Christian, indifferent to religion or consciously without it, or even professedly atheist."

Cardinal Ottaviani, setting forth the principles that should guide the *Catholic* state, affirmed that when the state is "Catholic," that is, when it is almost totally or in its absolute majority composed of Catholic citizens, it is the duty of those who govern "to protect against everything that would undermine it the religious unity of a people who unanimously know themselves to be in secure possession of religious truth."

With reference to other cults, the Cardinal asserted that tolerance could be used, even in the case of a *Catholic* state, when there were *very serious reasons* for it. He says that the Church, too, recognizes the fact that some who govern Catholic countries may find it necessary, for very serious reasons, to grant tolerance to

other cults. But, coming to concrete applications, the Cardinal nevertheless reminds us that "tolerance is not the same thing as freedom to propagandize in such a way as to foment religious discord and to disturb the secure possession of truth and of religious practice in countries like Italy, Spain, and others."

The Holy Father, in the above mentioned discourse, has, as I have said, touched upon another problem, the question as to whether or not other cults can be tolerated throughout the entire territory of an international community. He considers the question: "could the norm be established in a community of states—at least in certain circumstances (*almeno in determinate circostanze*)—that the free exercise of a belief and of a religious or moral practice which possess validity in one of the member states, be not hindered (*impedito*) throughout the entire territory of the community of nations by state laws or coercive measures?" Or, according to the text of the *Ci riesce,* "in other words, the question is raised whether in the circumstances 'non impedire' or toleration (*tolerare*) is permissible, and whether, consequently, positive repression is not always a duty."

The problem of tolerance, as it was envisioned in Cardinal Ottaviani's discourse with reference to a Catholic state, and *a fortiori,* as it was envisioned by the Holy Father with reference to a community of states, within which community there are many religions, must be considered with that practicality of outlook which Pope Leo XIII manifested long ago, when, in the *Immortale Dei,* he asserted that "although the Church deems it unlawful to place the various forms of divine worship on the same footing as the true religion, it does not, on that account, condemn those rulers who, for the sake of securing some great good or of hindering some great evil, patiently allow custom or usage to be a kind of sanction for each kind of religion having its place in the state" (Acta Leonis XIII, V, 141).

His Holiness Pius XII, confirming the principle expounded by Leo XIII, has said: "The duty of repressing moral and religious error cannot therefore be an ultimate norm of action. It must be subordinate to *higher and more general* norms, which, *in some circumstances,* permit, and even perhaps seem to indicate as the better policy, toleration of error in order to promote *a greater good.*"

The Holy Father spoke of "tolerance" and of "impeding." The concept of "tolerance" actually presupposes that of "evils," innate in the thing that is tolerated or is not impeded. Such is the teaching of St. Augustine: "Tolerantia quae dicitur . . . non est nisi in malis" (Enarrat. in Ps. 31. *MPL*, 36:271).

The nature of such tolerance, the "fundamental theoretical principle," has thus already been applied by the Sovereign Pontiff to the community of states. It is, "within the limits of the possible and lawful, to promote everything that facilitates union and makes it more effective; to remove everything that disturbs it; to tolerate at times that which it is impossible to correct but which, on the other hand, must not be permitted to make a shipwreck of the community, from which a higher good is hoped for."

These considerations, in so far as they have reference to a community of states of many religions, are not, on the other hand, verified in the case envisioned in Cardinal Ottaviani's discourse. This discourse had reference to an individual Catholic state, not bound by juridical ties of a community of states within which community several religions exist.

With reference to all states, however, either considered apart from the juridical bonds or within the international juridical order, the Holy Father has confirmed the principles set forth by Cardinal Ottaviani concerning the rights of religious truth, which is the Catholic truth. Here are the words of His Holiness, in the allocution *Ci riesce.*

> No human authority, no state, no community of states, whatever be their religious character, can give a positive command or positive authorization to teach or to do that which would be contrary to religious truth and moral good. Such a command or such an authorization would have no obligatory power and would remain without effect. No authority may give such a command, because it is contrary to nature to oblige the spirit and the will of man to error and evil, or to consider one or the other as indifferent. Not even God could give such a positive command or positive authorization, because it would be in contradiction to His absolute truth and sanctity.

Pius XII has summed up the entire question in these terms:

> Thus the two principles are clarified to which recourse must be had in concrete cases for the answer to the serious question concerning

the attitude which the jurist, the statesman and the sovereign Catholic state is to adopt in consideration of the community of nations in regard to a formula of religious and moral toleration as described above. First: that which does not correspond to truth or to the norm of morality objectively has no right to exist, to be spread, or to be activated. Secondly: failure to impede this with civil laws and coercive measures can nevertheless be justified in the interests of a higher and more general good.

With reference, then, to the question of fact, the question as to whether or not in the concrete the conditions for toleration of other religions exist, the Holy Father has declared that the decision belongs primarily to the Catholic statesman, and that, "in what concerns religion and morality, he [the Catholic statesman] will also ask for the judgment of the Church."

As we see, despite the fact that he was dealing with a different problem, the Holy Father's allocution constitutes a most magnificent confirmation of and a most solemn seal of approval upon Cardinal Ottaviani's discourse. And, after all, that discourse did nothing more than to recall the principles set forth in the encyclicals and in the other pontifical documents on the delicate and serious question of the relations between Church and state.

GIUSEPPE DI MEGLIO

Rome

PÈRE LAGRANGE

In [Lagrange's] day, matters biblical were in tremendous turmoil; rationalism and skepticism had joined hands with modernism; men like Loisy and Renan succumbed to the brilliance of an "enlightened" age. In such straits, a man of action was needed who was not only a spiritual giant, but an intellectual giant as well, with mastery in all the biblical sciences, one thoroughly grounded on the traditional as well as the "modern." Such a man we find in P. Lagrange, a master not only in almost every field of biblical studies: Oriental languages, archeology, philology, but also in ancient history, both religious and political. Because of his reverence for the traditional, his penetrating analysis of the modern, his synthesis of the whole, he can be likened to a St. Augustine and a St. Thomas.

—Francis J. Schroeder, in *Père Lagrange and Biblical Inspiration* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1954), p. 38.

LATIN DOCUMENTS

To the one who draws the assignment of drafting a document for which no form can be found in the usual manuals, the review *Latinitas*, published in Vatican City, is well worth the three dollar subscription.

Often it is necessary to find a word which will express exactly some new concept which the progress of the modern world has thrust upon us and for which the language of the classics makes no provision. Classical dictionaries are of no avail. Even dictionaries which try to keep up with the modern world may not contain the exact expression for the newest concepts. The section of *Latinitas*, however, which deals with new words for these ideas will prove very useful in supplementing the dictionaries which are necessarily less up-to-date.

There is a further advantage in turning to the review in question for these new words, for they are more likely to be universally understood than would be the inventions of individual writers in various countries, each with his own background in his mother tongue and with his own "feel" for the roots of Latin words which he might employ to express the new concept. Using the word agreed upon by scholars in various countries and published in *Latinitas*, the writer can feel more certain that he will make himself understood by those for whom he writes.

For those who do not have occasion to do a great deal of writing in Latin, but wish to keep themselves ready to do so when called upon, the section of the review dealing with rules of writing Latin, with grammar and syntax, will prove of great assistance. The same might be said for the section dealing with the composition and elaboration of speeches. In this day, when international congresses on various subjects are multiplying, it is becoming more and more important that scholars be able to communicate their thoughts in a common language which will be understood by all the participants in the congress. Latin, for centuries the medium of communication between learned men, is still a basic language used by the cultured gentlemen of many countries both for speaking and for writing, and is, therefore, well suited to this purpose. One who has perused the section of the review dealing with the elegant style of Latin speeches such as the great humanists developed in

the course of the centuries will not find himself at a disadvantage in addressing a learned gathering.

Latinitas, be it noted, does not confine itself to classical authors, but contains studies also upon the works of the humanists and of modern writers of Latin. So frequently is Latin referred to as a "dead" language that one sometimes forgets that it is still in use among many people and for many purposes.

For those who are interested in methods of teaching Latin, whether in the classroom or in the preparation of textbooks, *Latinitas* contains a section dealing with these matters. In our day, when the problem of how to teach Latin to obtain the best results is being much discussed, no one who is interested in this subject can afford to miss the discussions printed in this review. From these discussions he can hope to draw conclusions which will help him to solve the particular problem which faces him.

The Latin documents of the Church are, of course, the best examples of the use of Latin in the modern world. It is natural, then, that they should be found printed in a review which is devoted to promoting the study of the Latin language. For those who do not have any other source from which to obtain these documents, the review could be recommended precisely for this purpose.

The studies on the natural and physical sciences and on new discoveries published in the review will acquaint the reader with the new words which have had to be coined to convey new ideas, while, at the same time, informing him of what has been discovered in various countries, the language of which may be totally unknown to him.

A further service rendered by *Latinitas* are the sections devoted to Chronicle, to Replies to Questions, to Correspondence, to Book Reviews. There are even "advertisements" to be found, written in Latin.

Interesting and, possibly, amusing as all this may be to the scholar who, after leaving seminary or school, wants to keep up on his classical education, it seems that the review will be of most practical use to the Chancery man who has to get that document written even though there is no form available for it and despite the fact that none of his dictionaries give him the exact and elegant word to convey the idea which is involved. Circumlocutions, the usual crutch, may make sense to the writer and to

those to whom he can explain his meaning, but they may convey a different idea to those into whose hands the document finally comes. If the word exists at all, *Latinitas* will probably have it. Since it has appeared, quarterly, only since the beginning of 1953, it should not be too difficult to get the back copies and build up a ready reference dictionary of the acceptable new words.

THOMAS OWEN MARTIN

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FIFTY YEARS AGO

In the June, 1904, issue of *The American Ecclesiastical Review* the first three articles are concerned with the construction of churches. The first article (anonymous) is an historical survey of the various styles of church architecture, beginning with the Greek and Roman, and coming down to medieval and modern styles. The author concludes, in reference to the types of architecture used in American churches: "All the styles of Europe are represented, and none, so far, has obtained or is likely to obtain the mastery." The second article, signed S.L.T., describes how the various portions of a church should be constructed—the doors, the windows, the sacristy, the altars, the pulpit, etc. The third article, by W. E. Anthony, discusses some practical problems connected with the construction of a church, such as the choosing of an architect, the place of the baptistery, and the lighting of the church. In reference to this last Mr. Anthony says: "Gas is much to be preferred, because it furnishes the 'dim religious light' associated with the traditional atmosphere of pious reflection to which the glare of innumerable electric bulbs would seem a contradiction." . . . Another anonymous article treats of the proper locality for the celebration of Mass, and explains the desecration and pollution of a church. . . . Fr. C. A. Wheatley, of England, writes on "The Spirit of the Divine Office." Every priest can find food for thought in his statement: "Each day we proclaim those among us blessed who meditate on His law and sing His praises; yet we hurry through the Office without thought, and frequently our desire at the beginning of it is that we might have reached the end." . . . A page is devoted to the memory of the distinguished Redemptorist scholar, Fr. Joseph Putzer, who died May 15, 1904. . . . The Studies and Conferences section contains some practical hints on the care and cleansing of the sacred vessels and the altar linen.

F. J. C.

MORE ABOUT THE "BAD-MARRIAGE" DILEMMA

The January issue of *The American Ecclesiastical Review* carried a criticism of an article by the distinguished English Dominican, Fr. Gerald Vann, entitled "The 'Bad-Marriage' Dilemma." While Father Vann was undoubtedly motivated by the commendable desire to offer priestly sympathy and spiritual assistance to persons living in an invalid marriage, some of his statements tended to give the impression (which Father Vann surely did not mean to give) that such persons may lawfully continue to live with their partners in the enjoyment of conjugal privileges, and even that it is possible for them to possess the state of grace while voluntarily remaining in this situation. Because these notions are erroneous, priests should be prepared to instruct their people, particularly those who may have drawn unwarranted conclusions from Father Vann's article, in the true doctrine on the "bad-marriage" dilemma. The purpose of the present article is to explain as clearly as lies within the author's ability the way in which a priest can expound the teaching of the Catholic Church regarding the status and the obligations of Catholics living in invalid unions —that is, unions which may be regarded as true marriages by the civil authority, but are not real marriages in the eyes of God and in the eyes of the Catholic Church. To this type of marriages we are referring when we speak of "bad-marriages."

Some Catholics are living in bad marriages which can be easily rectified, if the parties wish to have this done, because there is no impediment to their valid conjugal union. For example, if two Catholics (or a Catholic and a non-Catholic) have had a marriage ceremony before a civil magistrate or a Protestant clergyman, both parties being previously unwed, there is ordinarily no difficulty in having their invalid union validated if they have recourse to their parish priest and are willing to go through the marriage ceremony prescribed by the Church. Even in the event that one of the parties is unwilling to renew the marriage consent in the presence of the priest, the Church can render their union a true marriage, in certain circumstances, by granting what is called a "radical healing." And so, a Catholic in this situation should refer the matter to a priest, with the hope that the union may be rectified and he or she will be permitted to receive the sacraments again.

However, the most difficult problem is presented by those unions which offer little or no hope of rectification. There can be various reasons why these "marriages" cannot be validated at least in present circumstances. The couple may be related to each other so closely by blood or affinity that the Church will not grant them a dispensation to wed. Or it may be that the man is an unfortunate priest who has abandoned his sacred vocation and contracted a civil marriage. Most frequently, however, the obstacle lies in the fact that one (at least) of the parties has been divorced civilly from a previous spouse who is still living. Despite the declaration of civil law to the contrary, the bond of the prior marriage still exists, and hence the present union can never be validated as long as the previous spouse is alive.

It would be false to say that nothing can be done in such a circumstance toward setting the situation aright, and that the couple must remain in sin. For there never is a situation in human life so complicated that a person must remain in sin. A sinner can always receive pardon and return to God's grace if he is willing to take the proper measures. But one of the essential measures is that he must have the firm purpose of avoiding all mortal sins in the future; and in the situation we are considering this means that he must firmly resolve to give up all the privileges of married life with the person with whom he is now living. Sometimes there is an obligation to separate from this person; at other times the two can be allowed to continue to live together (because they have young children), but without any of the rights proper to husband and wife. In the words of Catholic theology, they may live together only as brother and sister. Undoubtedly, a separation or acceptance of a continent cohabitation may be very difficult, and even heart-rending; but it is not impossible, with the aid of God's grace, which will be granted to those who fervently ask His aid.

But, it might be asked, does not the contract which the couple made in the marriage ceremony bind them to maintain a husband-wife relationship, especially if one of the parties is a non-Catholic, sincerely convinced that he is truly married to the Catholic party? The answer is a definite negative. Even though the non-Catholic may believe that the present union is a valid marriage, his ignorance or good will does not validate a marriage which by God's law is invalid. And the Catholic party, aware that there is no real mar-

riage, is not permitted to live as a married person merely because the other party believes the marriage to be valid. A contract to do something immoral has no binding force; on the contrary, it must be repudiated. A gangster who has accepted a sum of money on the agreement that he will kill a certain innocent citizen has no obligation to perpetrate the crime, but on the contrary has an obligation to abstain from this heinous deed. So, too, the woman who has entered into an agreement to treat a man as her husband who cannot become her husband according to God's law has no obligation to fulfil this agreement, but on the contrary is bound to abstain from all marital relations with him, for these are sinful actions. To attempt to justify such actions on the ground that she is unwilling to make another human being suffer is utterly unreasonable. What a strange principle to hold—that when there is a choice between offending God and hurting the feelings of a human being, it is preferable to offend God!

We can imagine a Catholic in a bad marriage saying: "I'm doing this *unwillingly*. I entered this marriage in a temporary aberration, swept along by my emotions, without realizing fully what I was doing. I do not really want to do anything wrong, and so I am not guilty of sin, because a person does not sin when he does something *unwillingly*." Such an excuse has no value because it is based on a misunderstanding of the word "unwillingly." It is true, when a person is *physically* forced into an evil act, despite his efforts to avoid it, he is not guilty of any sin because the deed is performed by him *unwillingly*, in the true sense of the word. Thus, when a girl is raped through physical violence, she is truly unwilling, and hence is guilty of no sin. But sometimes when people say that they do something evil unwillingly, they mean that they wish circumstances were such that the act were not a sin—but nevertheless, they perform the act freely, without any physical compulsion. This type of action remains a sin, despite the hypothetical wish to the contrary. It is only in this second sense that the person aware that he is involved in a bad marriage yet voluntarily continuing to exercise sexual relations says that he is performing these immoral deeds *unwillingly*. Actually he is *willingly* committing sin, even though there is a degree of reluctance on his part. Perhaps there was some measure of mental aberration when he entered marriage,

but now that he clearly perceives that the continuance of marital relations is gravely sinful, he must desist from them.

A statement made by Father Vann which is most likely to be misunderstood is the assertion that a person who continues to live as a spouse in a bad marriage can be "close to God." Now, while it is true that a person in mortal sin can retain the supernatural virtues of faith and hope, and can continue to pray, and for such reasons might be said (in a broad sense) to be "close to God," yet, in the usual Catholic terminology we do not say that one is "close to God" unless he is in the state of sanctifying grace. But one who is knowingly living in a bad marriage with the intention of continuing in this state (using the privileges of marriage) cannot possess the state of sanctifying grace. Unless he has the firm purpose of renouncing all mortal sin in future he will remain in mortal sin and cannot be "close to God" in the ordinarily accepted sense of the expression.

Does this mean that a person living in a bad marriage with no intention of giving up conjugal relations should neglect the practices of Catholic life, such as prayer, attendance at Mass, the observance of Friday abstinence, etc.? Definitely not. These practices should be kept up, for they may win for the poor sinner at some future time an extraordinary outpouring of grace, enabling him to repent and turn from sin. Even if he does not repent before death, his punishment in eternity will be less than if he had neglected prayer and other devotions. However, these good works will not add anything to his eternal happiness, if he is eventually saved; they are "dead" works, in theological language. And, of themselves, these devotions will not obtain sanctifying grace. All the prayers, novenas, fasts, contributions to pious causes, etc., that a person living in a bad marriage may perform will not put him in the state of grace for a single moment unless he is determined to avoid all mortal sins in future—which includes abstaining from every voluntary act of sexual enjoyment with the partner to whom he is not validly married.

According to Catholic teaching, anyone who passes into eternity in the state of mortal sin will be eternally punished in hell. Accordingly, if one who knows that he is involved in a bad marriage and intends to continue living in this situation as a spouse is suddenly overtaken by death without any chance to repent sincerely, that

person will be eternally lost. This is a severe doctrine, yet it was taught by Jesus Christ when He said: "If thy hand or foot is an occasion of sin to thee, cut it off and cast it from thee. It is better to enter into life maimed or lame than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire" (*Matt.* 18:8). Our Lord meant that even when the rejection of a sin is as painful as the cutting off of a limb—as may well be true when a person is living in a bad marriage—the sin must be given up if one wishes to escape the danger of eternal damnation.

And so, to the Catholic living in a bad marriage, the Catholic Church, while deeply sympathetic and fully aware of the difficulties involved, says pleadingly, as a mother to her erring child: "If you value your immortal soul, don't run the chance of losing it forever merely for a few years of happines in this world. Separate from your partner in sin, or at least stop participating in sexual relations, to which you have no right, if circumstances are such as to make complete separation morally impossible."

A problem pertinent to bad marriages concerns the attitude which Catholics should take toward persons living in a marriage which is publicly known to be invalid. The general principle is that they must treat such persons with Christian charity, but not in such a manner as to imply that they regard them as husband and wife. The proper application of this principle is difficult to determine, at times; but the following examples will serve to clarify the problem.

The relatives and friends of a Catholic who contracts a bad marriage (usually a marriage with a divorced person before a civil magistrate or a non-Catholic clergyman) should not attend the ceremony or the social function that follows. To do so would ordinarily be a sin of scandal, for it would promote the false notion that an adulterous union is actually not much different from a lawful and holy marriage. The parents of a Catholic partner in such a union would be particularly guilty if they showed their approval by attending such a travesty of wedlock, inasmuch as they have a special obligation to reprove a son or daughter entering on a state of sin. Sometimes we hear the pathetic plea of a parent: "I want to keep in the good graces of my child, so that I can induce him to do what is right later, and if I stay away from the wed he will never speak to me again." But this excuse does not ju ify

the act of external approval to something that is a heinous violation of God's law: "Thou shalt not commit adultery." However, after such a marriage, parents might occasionally visit the couple, as long as it is evident that they do not thereby intend to sanction their sinful cohabitation.

Friends of a Catholic girl planning an invalid union should not attend the "shower" nor send a gift to the couple. At most, they might send the girl a personal gift, particularly one of religious nature, such as a rosary or a crucifix or a prayerbook.

Ordinarily no scandal is given by Catholics who associate with an invalidly married person in business or professional or political life. The Catholic doctors of a hospital may continue to have consultations and meetings on medical problems and practices with one of their number who is entangled in an invalid marriage. The Catholic housewife need not hesitate to buy groceries at the corner store, if she finds this convenient, merely because the grocer, a Catholic, is married to a divorced woman.

But social meetings are different, at least when both partners in the bad marriage are together. It would seem that if I am invited to a dinner and find among the guests a couple publicly known to be living in a union that is not a real wedlock, I could greet them courteously and even address the lady as "Mrs. Blank." Charity and regard for social amenities would seem to allow this much. But, as far as social events in my own home are concerned, I must consider myself bound to take a firm stand, lest I seem to approve an invalid union. Apart from very exceptional circumstances, I must abstain from inviting such a couple to my house for a dinner or a party. Similarly, I must decline the invitations they may send me to merely social affairs in their home. If I give them the marks of respect due to a properly married couple by sending and accepting invitations to or from them as a couple, I am confirming the notion which these unfortunate persons so pathetically desire to be fostered—that it doesn't make much difference whether they are really married or not, as long as they maintain the external appearance of a married couple.

The number of bad marriages among Catholics is unfortunately increasing, so that the priest engaged in the parochial ministry frequently encounters persons living in a "muddled marriage." His task is to persuade Catholics in such a situation to give up their

sinful mode of life and to return to God's grace. He must point out to them that they are running the risk of eternal damnation, and must supplement his powers of persuasion with fervent and frequent prayers to the Good Shepherd for these unfortunates. When he discovers a Catholic planning a bad marriage, he must beg him to discontinue his plans at once, for otherwise he will find himself in a situation that will cause him profound anguish of soul in the years to come. And when the occasion calls for it, he must urge the relatives and friends of invalidly married Catholics to avoid everything that might encourage these persons in their sinful mode of life, and to use their influence to induce them to return to God.

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NEWMAN'S APOLOGETICAL METHOD

Starting with man as he is seen through psychological study, Newman was convinced of the importance of personal experience, the role of the imagination, and the great appeal of the concrete in man's acceptance of the Church. In his arguments on the recognition of the Church, therefore, he endeavored to strike a familiar chord in the mind of his reader by appealing to those elements which he would readily recognize as true because he had been prepared through proper dispositions to look for them. Man is moved to reason more from concrete things than by logical abstraction, according to Newman, and thus he brought before the eye of the hearer a picture of the Church which would appeal to the imagination.

In his treatment of the prophecies Newman differs from other writers on this very point. He does not burden the inquirer with a detailed treatment of the various prophecies which have foretold one or other quality of the true Church, but rather places before him the picture of the Christian Church painted in colors borrowed from various prophets. He treats the Church of the New Law as the natural continuation of the Jewish Church, thus giving his reader a concrete object, the continued covenant between God and man, to contemplate.

—J. Richard Quinn, in *The Recognition of the True Church According to John Henry Newman* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1954), pp. 197 f.

Answers to Questions

"SOUVENIRS" FROM RESTAURANTS

Question: What is the morality of taking spoons, napkins, towels, etc., from restaurants, hotels, motels and other such establishments, as "souvenirs"? Apparently many persons regard this as a perfectly lawful custom, and I have been told that such establishments make provision for such "souvenir-collecting" by regularly replenishing their supply of equipment.

Answer: It would seem that this manner of collecting "souvenirs" is nothing else but theft. The mere fact that a restaurant or hotel makes provision for such purloining on the part of the guests by arranging to purchase extra equipment at regular intervals is no proof that the owners or managers give permission. It would seem merely to indicate that they know that many of their guests are dishonest and that they cannot take adequate measures against their thefts. Sometimes the statement is made that the owners and managers condone the collecting of "souvenirs" by their guests on the ground that these articles, spread through the country, will serve as good advertising material for their establishments. But this seems like a far-fetched argument. If these persons are willing to advertise in this way they should make an announcement to that effect.

The manager of a large hotel whom I consulted on this matter informed me that the taking of "souvenirs" occurs every month to the extent of thousands of dollars. He also assured me that the management does not grant any permission to guests to make off with the equipment, but accepts the situation as something that inevitably is going to happen. It would be advisable for priests in their instructions to point out the sinfulness of this custom, which apparently is regarded by so many persons as perfectly lawful.

It must be pointed out, however, that if the managers raised the rates for all guests to a sum above a just price in order to make up for the loss they are sustaining from this custom of thievery, an individual guest would not sin against justice by taking some-

thing equivalent to this extra price. However, until it were proved that such a situation actually exists, the guest would not be entitled to this form of occult compensation.

A PROBLEM ON THE LAW OF ABSTINENCE

Question: If a school boy under twenty-one years of age inadvertently eats meat at breakfast or lunch on a day of partial abstinence, such as Ember Wednesday, is he forbidden to eat meat the rest of the day even at his principal meal?

Answer: On a day of partial abstinence, according to the rules laid down by most of our bishops, a Catholic may eat meat only *once*, and that *at the principal meal*. The questioner evidently supposes that the meal at which the boy takes meat is not his principal meal, and cannot be made such after he has realized that he was not entitled to take meat. For if, after he had eaten the meat, he could make this meal his principal meal, he should make this change. For minors the principal meal on a fast day (and the days of partial abstinence are all fast days) is a matter of choice, since they are not restricted as to quantity of food they may take at any meal.

However, if the amount of meat taken at this minor meal was not sufficient to suit the needs of an adolescent, it would seem that the boy is entitled to a full portion of meat at a later meal. Of course, the requirements for a day of partial abstinence depend on the will of our bishops, who have instituted the days of partial abstinence. But a reasonable interpretation of their will seems to allow for a growing boy a substantial meal of meat; hence, when the amount of meat taken inadvertently outside the principal meal is comparatively small, the right to a generous amount of meat at the principal meal still remains. Now, the school boy at his midday lunch does not ordinarily have enough food to constitute his principal meal. Hence, when he inadvertently eats meat at this meal, he should be permitted to have meat again at the family dinner in the evening. It should be noted that we are speaking of a boy who takes meat at lunch *inadvertently*. If the boy has brought meat to school as a part of his lunch and is informed before lunch that he may eat meat only at the principal meal, he should abstain from

meat at lunch (unless he cannot get sufficient nourishment in some other food). These points should be brought out to our Catholic school children, since the new ruling on days of partial abstinence has imposed on the children of working-men an obligation which they did not have previously, when they could enjoy the "working-man's privilege" that allowed them meat as often as they wished on Ember Wednesdays and Saturdays, and the Vigils of Pentecost and All Saints' Day—the days which are now days of partial abstinence.

THE *CONFITEOR* IN THE LAST RITES

Question: When a priest confers the last rites—Viaticum, Extreme Unction and the Apostolic Blessing—must he recite the *Confiteor* three times, or will one recitation suffice?

Answer: On Feb. 5, 1841, the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences declared that when the Viaticum, Extreme Unction and the Apostolic Blessing are conferred successively on the same occasion, the *Confiteor* must be recited three times (*Coll. S.C. Prop. Fid.*, n. 917). A modification of this ruling was granted in a decision of the Holy Office, Sept. 1, 1851, stating that when the three rites are conferred on one occasion and time is pressing, one recitation of the *Confiteor* is sufficient (*Coll. S.C. Prop. Fid.*, n. 1067).

FRANCIS J. CONNELL, C.SS.R.

CANDLES AT HIGH MASS

Question: How many candles must be lighted for High Mass? Must these candles of necessity be the so-called "high candles"?

Answer: Generally speaking, it is customary to light six candles at a High Mass, whether it is a Missa cantata or a Solemn High Mass with deacon and subdeacon. At least this seems to be the accepted custom in the United States. The Liturgical writers generally advise that six candles are to be used at least on the more solemn days and on special occasions, and at least four on other

days. The type of candle or candlestick is not specified so that the smaller candles would fulfill the law just as well as the "high candles."

ASH WEDNESDAY CUSTOM

Question: What can be said about the practice of giving ashes to the faithful in envelopes, etc., in order that they might take them home and impose them on those who are sick or otherwise unable to attend church on Ash Wednesday?

Answer: This review some years ago gave the following reply to a similar inquiry. "It can hardly be said that the S. Congregation has disapproved of the practice of giving some of the ashes blessed on Ash Wednesday to persons who wish to carry them away for reverent use as a sacramental. The Archbishop of Colombo (Ceylon) some years ago wrote to the S. Congregation stating that in his missions the practice prevailed of Christians taking the blest ashes home with them in order that they might apply them in form of a sacramental to the forehead of the sick, etc. He asked whether or not, in view of the Constitution of Pope Benedict XIV, *Omnium sollicitudinem* (which forbade the ashes to be used in any other way than that prescribed by the Church), the abovementioned custom might be tolerated. In reply the S. Congregation simply wrote: 'Non esse interloquendum.'

"This means that the question was not to be categorically answered or discussed by the Sacred Congregation for the purpose of giving a decision. The reason seems plain. In itself the use of the ashes as a sacramental by the laity cannot be censured, nor is it excluded by the words of Benedict XIV, when duly considered in their context. On the other hand the custom may easily be abused. Since, however, it rests with the priest who blesses the ashes to dispense or to withhold them, his discretion should be sufficient safeguard for the reverence of the usage. It lies with him to explain the doctrine of the Church which prevents superstitious use of the ashes, and his warnings (if necessary) against possible desecration are supposed to reach the faithful to whom he ministers."

The late Father Mahoney who wrote for the English *Clergy Review* felt such a custom was unlawful. However, he recognized the fact that this publication as well as the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* maintained that a priest could use his own discretion in the matter. Moreover, he felt, too, that while such a practice is not liturgically correct and may be subject to certain abuse, yet it may be better to tolerate the continuation of such a practice rather than upset the piety of the good people by forbidding it completely.

MARIAN YEAR VESTMENTS

Question: During the Marian Year, we have heard, permission is granted to wear blue vestments. Is this correct? Is there anything out of order in having white vestments trimmed in blue?

Answer: To date we have neither seen nor heard of an indult permitting the use of blue vestments in this country on account of the Marian Year. The prescriptions regarding the trimmings and ornamentations on vestments are not many and give us ample leeway. Dom Roulin *(Vestments and Vesture)* specifically mentions the various shades of blue. The one general rule that must be kept in mind is that one color must be plainly predominant and, where blue is used for ornamentation, the background material, let us say for example, must be predominantly white.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Question: Are there any particular specifications about material, size, etc., for the Stations of the Cross?

Answer: Peter Anson in his treatise on the Stations of the Cross says no general principles can be given regarding materials. "It should not be forgotten that the purpose of these representations of incidents in the Passion is to arouse greater devotion in those who are making the Stations. It is therefore important that in style and treatment they should be intelligible to simple folk who know nothing about art. It should be remembered that Canon 1279 forbids exhibiting an unusual image—*imaginem insolitam*—in churches, and that Stations are not carried out to prove the technical capabilities of an artist, but for a very definite function."

PASCHAL CANDLE

Question: Is it necessary for us to purchase a new Easter candle each year? Are there any specific regulations about the content of the Paschal candle? At the Easter Vigil service during the procession may stearine candles or candles of a low beeswax content be carried by the faithful?

Answer: (1) The Congregation of Sacred Rites has given a decision stating that it is not necessary or obligatory to use a new Paschal candle each year. However, where the Vigil service or Holy Saturday ceremonies are carried out new grains of incense must be inserted in the Paschal candle even though the candle is carried over from the previous year. (2) The material of the Easter candle must be beeswax. A mixture of materials may be used but beeswax must form the predominant or greater portion. The percentage of beeswax will be determined by diocesan regulations. (3) Candles made of beeswax and meeting the diocesan regulations must be used on the altar for any liturgical function. For decorative purposes candles placed before images and shrines as well as candles placed outside the altar need not be of beeswax. The same can be said for candles carried in processions.

FUNERAL PROBLEMS

Question: (1) Do the acolytes at a funeral or Requiem High Mass carry lighted candles? (2) What is the proper oration to be sung at the absolution?

Answer: (1) The acolytes carry lighted candles as usual in the procession to and from the altar. They leave the candles lighted on the credence table during the entire Mass. They do not carry the candles during the singing of the Gospel by the deacon. They do, however, carry lighted candles for the absolution. (2) If the body is present the prayer sung during the absolution is *Deus, cui proprium est,* with the word *sacerdotis* added to the baptismal name when it is the burial service for a priest. When the body is not present the prayer, *Absolve, quaesumus Domine, animam famuli tui,* is said and the baptismal name of the person inserted. The celebrant may sing the oration he used at the Mass or choose any other suitable prayer from the *Orationes diversae pro defunctis.*

WALTER J. SCHMITZ, SS.

Analecta

THE ENCYCLICAL LETTER *SACRA VIRGINITAS**

To Our Venerable Brothers
the Patriarchs Primates Archbishops Bishops
and Other Local Ordinaries
in Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See

PIUS PP XII

Venerable Brothers

Health and Apostolic Benediction

Holy virginity and that perfect chastity which is consecrated to the service of God is without doubt among the most precious treasures which the Founder of the Church has left in heritage to the society which He established.

This assuredly was the reason why the Fathers of the Church confidently asserted that perpetual virginity is a very noble gift which the Christian religion has bestowed on the world. They rightly noted that the pagans of antiquity imposed this way of life on the Vestals only for a certain time;[1] and that, although in the Old Testament virginity is ordered to be kept and preserved, it is only a previous requisite for marriage;[2] and furthermore, as Ambrose writes,[3] "We read that also in the temple of Jerusalem there were virgins. But what does the Apostle say? 'Now all these things happened to them in figure,'[4] that this might be a foreshadowing of what was to come."

* Editor's Note: This month *AER* is carrying the unofficial translation of *Sacra virginitas* as issued by the Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana. Since the editors of *AER* are convinced that many readers will wish to have the original text conveniently available for reference and use, the Latin text will be carried in the "Analecta" section of our next issue (July, 1954).

[1] Cf. St. Ambrose, *De virginibus,* lib. 1, c. 4, n. 15; *De virginitate,* c. 3, n. 13. *MPL,* XVI, 193, 269.

[2] Cf. *Ex.,* 22: 16 f.; *Deut.,* 22: 23-29; *Ecclus.,* 42: 9.

[3] St. Ambrose, *De virginibus,* lib. 1, c. 3, n. 12. *MPL,* XVI, 192.

[4] *I Cor.,* 10: 11.

Indeed right from Apostolic times this virtue has been thriving and flourishing in the garden of the Church. When the Acts of the Apostles[5] say that Philip the deacon was the father of four virgins, the word certainly refers to their state of life rather than to their age. And not much later Ignatius of Antioch salutes the virgins,[6] who together with the widows, formed a not insignificant part of the Christian community of Smyrna. In the second century, as St. Justin testifies, "many men and women, sixty and seventy years old, imbued from childhood with the teaching of Christ, keep their integrity."[7] Gradually the number of men and women who had vowed their chastity to God grew; likewise the importance of the office they fulfilled in the Church increased notably, as We have shown more at length in Our Apostolic Constitution, "Sponsa Christi."[8]

Further, the Fathers of the Church, such as Cyprian, Athanasius, Ambrose, John Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustine, and many others, have sung the praises of virginity. And this doctrine of the Fathers, augmented through the course of centuries by the Doctors of the Church and the masters of asceticism, helps greatly either to inspire in the faithful of both sexes the firm resolution of dedicating themselves to God by the practice of perfect chastity and of persevering thus till death, or to strengthen them in the resolution already taken.

Innumerable is the multitude of those who from the beginning of the Church until our time have offered their chastity to God. Some have preserved their virginity unspoiled, others, after the death of their spouse, have consecrated to God their remaining years in the unmarried state, and still others, after repenting their sins, have chosen to lead a life of perfect chastity; all of them at one in this common oblation, that is, for love of God to abstain for the rest of their lives from sexual pleasure. May then what the Fathers of the Church preached about the glory and merit of virginity be an invitation, a help, and a source of strength to those who have made the sacrifice to persevere with constancy, and not take back or claim for themselves even the smallest part of the holocaust they have laid on the altar of God.

[5] *Acts*, 21 : 9.

[6] Cf. St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Smyrnaeos*, c. 13. In the Funk-Diekamp edition of *Patres apostolici*, I, 286.

[7] St. Justin Martyr, *Apol. I*, c. 15. *MPG*, VI, 349.

[8] Cf. the Apostolic Constitution *Sponsa Christi*, *AAS*, XLIII (1951), 5-8.

And while this perfect chastity is the subject of one of the three vows which constitute the religious state,[9] and is also required by the Latin Church of clerics in major orders[10] and demanded from members of Secular Institutes,[11] it also flourishes among many who are lay people in the full sense: men and women who are not constituted in a public state of perfection and yet by private promise or vow completely abstain from marriage and sexual pleasures, in order to serve their neighbor more freely and to be united with God more easily and more closely.

To all of these beloved sons and daughters who in any way have consecrated their bodies and souls to God, We address Ourselves, and exhort them earnestly to strengthen their holy resolution and be faithful to it.

However, since there are some who, straying from the right path in this matter, so exalt marriage as to rank it ahead of virginity and thus depreciate chastity consecrated to God and clerical celibacy, Our apostolic duty demands that We now in a particular manner declare and uphold the Church's teaching on the sublime state of virginity, and so defend Catholic truth against these errors.

I.

First of all, We think it should be noted that the Church has taken what is capital in her teaching on virginity from the very lips of her Divine Spouse.

For when the disciples thought that the obligations and burdens of marriage, which their Master's discourse had made clear, seemed extremely heavy, they said to Him: "If the case stands so between man and wife, it is better not to marry at all."[12] Jesus Christ replied that His ideal is not understood by everybody but only by those who have received the gift; for some are hindered from marriage because of some defect of nature, others because of the violence and malice of men, while still others freely abstain of their own will, and this "for the kingdom of heaven." And He concludes with these words, "He that can take it, let him take it."[13]

[9] Cf. *CIC*, can. 487.

[10] Cf. *ibid.*, can. 132, sect. 1.

[11] Cf. the Apostolic Constitution *Provida Mater*, art. III, sect. 2. *AAS*, XXXIX (1947), 121.

[12] *Matt.* 19:10.

[13] *Ibid.*, 19:11 f.

By these words the Divine Master is speaking not of bodily impediments to marriage, but of a resolution freely made to abstain all one's life from marriage and sexual pleasure. For in likening those who of their own free will have determined to renounce these pleasures to those who by nature or the violence of men are forced to do so, is not the Divine Redeemer teaching us that chastity to be really perfect must be perpetual?

Here also it must be added, as the Fathers and Doctors of the Church have clearly taught, that virginity is not a Christian virtue unless we embrace it "for the kingdom of heaven";[14] that is, unless we take up this way of life precisely to be able to devote ourselves more freely to divine things, to attain heaven more surely, and with skillful efforts to lead others more readily to the kingdom of heaven.

Those therefore who do not marry because of exaggerated self-interest, or because, as Augustine says,[15] they shun the burdens of marriage, or because like Pharisees they proudly flaunt their physical integrity, an attitude which has been condemned by the Council of Gangra, lest men and women renounce marriage as though it were something despicable instead of because virginity is something beautiful and holy—none of these can claim for themselves the honor of Christian virginity.[16]

Moreover, the Apostle of the Gentiles, writing under divine inspiration, makes this point: "He that is without a wife, is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. . . . And the unmarried woman and the virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy in body and spirit."[17]

This then is the primary purpose, this is the central idea of Christian virginity: to aim only at the divine, to turn thereto the whole mind and soul; to want to please God in everything, to think of Him continually, to consecrate body and soul completely to Him.

This is the way the Fathers of the Church have always interpreted the words of Jesus Christ and the teaching of the Apostle of the Gentiles; for from the very earliest days of the Church they have considered virginity a consecration of body and soul offered to God. Thus St. Cyprian demands of virgins that "once they

[14] *Ibid.*, 19: 12.
[15] St. Augustine, *De sancta virginitate*, c. 22. *MPL*, XL, 407.
[16] Cf. canon 9. Mansi, *Collectio conciliorum*, II, 1096.
[17] *I Cor.*, 7: 32, 34.

have dedicated themselves to Christ by renouncing the pleasures of the flesh, they have vowed themselves body and soul to God . . . and should seek to adorn themselves only for their Lord and please only Him."[18] And the Bishop of Hippo, going further, says, "Virginity is not honored because it is bodily integrity, but because it is something dedicated to God. . . . Nor do we extol virgins because they are virgins, but because they are virgins dedicated to God in loving continence."[19] And the masters of Sacred Theology, St. Thomas Aquinas[20] and St. Bonaventure,[21] supported by the authority of Augustine, teach that virginity does not possess the stability of virtue unless there is a vow to keep it forever intact. And certainly those who obligate themselves by perpetual vow to keep their virginity put into practice in the most perfect way possible what Christ said about perpetual abstinence from marriage; nor can it justly be affirmed that the intention of those who wish to leave open a way of escape from this state of life is better and more perfect.

Moreover the Fathers of the Church considered this obligation of perfect chastity as a kind of spiritual marriage, in which the soul is wedded to Christ; so that some go so far as to compare breaking the vow with adultery.[22] Thus St. Athanasius writes that the Catholic Church has been accustomed to call those who have the virtue of virginity the spouses of Christ.[23] And St. Ambrose, writing succinctly of the consecrated virgin, says, "She is a virgin who is married to God."[24] In fact, as is clear from the writings of this same Doctor of Milan,[25] as early as the fourth century the rite of consecration of a virgin was very like the rite the Church uses in our own day in the marriage blessing.[26]

For the same reason the Fathers exhort virgins to love their Divine Spouse more ardently than they would love a husband

[18] St. Cyprian, *De habitu virginum*, 4. *MPL*, IV, 443.

[19] St. Augustine, *De sancta virginitate*, cc. 8, 11. *MPL*, 400 f.

[20] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theol.*, IIa-IIae, q. 152, a. 3, ad 4.

[21] St. Bonaventure, *De perfectione evangelica*, q. 3, a. 3, sol. 5.

[22] Cf. St. Cyprian, *De habitu virginum*, 4. *MPL*, IV, 459.

[23] Cf. St. Athanasius, *Apol. ad Constant.*, 33. *MPG*, XXV, 640.

[24] St. Ambrose, *De virginibus*, lib. 1, c. 8, n. 52. *MPL*, XVI, 202.

[25] Cf. *ibid.*, lib. 3, cc. 1 ff, nn. 1-14; *De institutione virginis*, c. 17, nn. 104-14. *MPL*, XVI, 219-24; 333-36.

[26] Cf. *Sacramentarium Leonianum*, 30. *MPL*, LV, 129; *Pontificale Romanum, De benedictione et consecratione virginum.*

had they married, and always in their thoughts and actions to fulfill His will.[27] Augustine writes to virgins: "Love with all your hearts Him Who is the most beautiful of the sons of men: you are free, your hearts are not fettered by conjugal bonds. . . . If then you would owe your husbands great love, how great is the love you owe Him because of Whom you have willed to have no husbands? Let Him Who was fastened to the cross be securely fastened to your hearts."[28] And this in other respects too is in harmony with the sentiments and resolutions which the Church herself requires of virgins on the day they are solemnly consecrated to God by inviting them to recite these words: "The kingdom of this earth and all worldly trappings I have valued as worthless for love of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Whom I have seen, loved, believed, and preferred above all else."[29] It is nothing else but love of Him that sweetly constrains the virgin to consecrate her body and soul entirely to her Divine Redeemer; thus St. Methodius, Bishop of Olympus, places these beautiful words on her lips: "You yourself, O Christ, are my all. For you I keep myself chaste, and holding aloft my shining lamp I run to meet you, my Spouse."[30] Certainly it is the love of Christ that urges a virgin to retire behind convent walls and remain there all her life, in order to contemplate and love the heavenly Spouse more easily and without hindrance; certainly it is the same love that strongly inspires her to spend her life and strength in works of mercy for the sake of her neighbor.

As for those men "who were not defiled with women, being virgins,"[31] the Apostle John asserts that, "they follow the Lamb wherever he goes."[32] Let us meditate then on the exhortation Augustine gives to all men of this class: "You follow the Lamb because the body of the Lamb is indeed virginal. . . . Rightly do you follow Him in virginity of heart and body wherever He goes. For what does following mean but imitation? Christ has suffered for us, leaving us an example, as the Apostle Peter says 'that we

[27] Cf. St. Cyprian, *De habitu virginum*, 4, 22. *MPL*, IV, 443 f., 462; St. Ambrose, *De virginibus*, lib. 1, c. 7, n. 37. *MPL*, XVI, 199.

[28] St. Augustine, *De sancta virginitate*, cc. 54 f. *MPL*, XL, 428.

[29] *Pontificale Romanum, De benedictione et consecratione virginum.*

[30] St. Methodius, *Convivium decem virginum*, orat. 11, c. 2. *MPG*, XVIII, 209.

[31] *Apoc.*, 14: 4. [32] *Ibid.*

should follow in his footsteps.' "[33] Hence all these disciples and spouses of Christ embraced the state of virginity, as St. Bonaventure says, "in order to become like unto Christ the Spouse, for that state makes virgins like unto Him."[34] It would hardly satisfy their burning love for Christ to be united with Him by the bonds of affection, but this love had perforce to express itself by the imitation of His virtues, and especially by conformity to His way of life, which was lived completely for the benefit and salvation of the human race. If priests, religious men and women, and others who in any way have vowed themselves to the divine service, cultivate perfect chastity, it is certainly for the reason that their Divine Master remained all His life a virgin. St. Fulgentius exclaims: "This is the only-begotten Son of God, the only-begotten Son of a virgin also, the only Spouse of all holy virgins, the fruit, the glory, the gift of holy virginity, whom virginity brought forth physically, to whom holy virginity is wedded spiritually, by whom holy virginity is made fruitful and kept inviolate, by whom she is adorned, to remain ever beautiful, by whom she is crowned, to reign forever glorious."[35]

And here We think it opportune, Venerable Brothers, to expose more fully and to explain more carefully why the love of Christ moves generous souls to abstain from marriage, and what is the mystical connection between virginity and the perfection of Christian charity. From our Lord's words referred to above, it has already been implied that this complete renunciation of marriage frees men from its grave duties and obligations. Writing by divine inspiration, the Apostle of the Gentiles proposes the reason for this freedom in these words: "And I would have you to be without solicitude. . . . But he that is with a wife is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife; and he is divided."[36] Here, however, it must be noted that the Apostle is not reproving men because they are concerned about their wives, nor does he reprehend wives because they seek to please their husbands; rather is he asserting clearly that their hearts are divided between love of God and love of their spouse, and beset by gnawing

[33] *I Pet.*, 2: 21; St. Augustine, *De sancta virginitate*, c. 27. *MPL*, XL, 411.
[34] St. Bonaventure, *De perfectione evangelica*, q. 3, a. 3.
[35] St. Fulgentius, *Epist.* 3, c. 4, n. 6. *MPL*, LXV, 326.
[36] *I Cor.*, 7: 32 f.

cares, and so by reason of the duties of their married state they can hardly be free to contemplate the divine. For the duty of the married life to which they are bound clearly demands: "They shall be two in one flesh."[37] For spouses are to be bound to each other by mutual bonds both in joy and in sorrow.[38] It is easy to see, therefore, why persons who desire to consecrate themselves to God's service embrace the state of virginity as a liberation, in order to be more entirely at God's disposition and devoted to the good of their neighbor. How, for example, could a missionary such as the wonderful St. Francis Xavier, a father of the poor such as the merciful St. Vincent de Paul, a zealous educator of youth like St. John Bosco, a tireless "mother of emigrants" like St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, have accomplished such gigantic and painful labors, if each had to look after the corporal and spiritual needs of a wife or husband and children.

There is yet another reason why souls desirous of a total consecration to the service of God and neighbor embrace the state of virginity. It is, as the holy Fathers have abundantly illustrated, the numerous advantages for advancement in spiritual life which derive from a complete renouncement of all sexual pleasure. It is not to be thought that such pleasure, when it arises from lawful marriage, is reprehensible in itself; on the contrary, the chaste use of marriage is ennobled and sanctified by a special sacrament, as the Fathers themselves have clearly remarked. Nevertheless, it must be equally admitted that as a consequence of the fall of Adam the lower faculties of human nature are no longer obedient to right reason, and may involve man in dishonorable actions. As the Angelic Doctor has it, the use of marriage "keeps the soul from full abandon to the service of God."[39]

It is that they may acquire this spiritual liberty of body and soul, and that they may be freed from temporal cares, that the Latin Church demands of her sacred ministers that they voluntarily oblige themselves to observe perfect chastity.[40] And "if a similar law," as Our predecessor of immortal memory Pius XI declared, "does not bind the ministers of the Oriental Church to the same degree, nevertheless among them too ecclesiastical celibacy

[37] *Gen.*, 2:24; Cf. *Matt.*, 19:5. [38] Cf. *I Cor.*, 7:39.
[39] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theol.*, IIa-IIae, q. 186, a. 4.
[40] Cf. *CIC*, can. 132, sect. 1.

occupies a place of honor, and, in certain cases, especially when the higher grades of the hierarchy are in question, it is a necessary and obligatory condition."[41]

Consider again that sacred ministers do not renounce marriage solely on account of their apostolic ministry, but also by reason of their service at the altar. For, if even the priests of the Old Testament had to abstain from the use of marriage during the period of their service in the Temple, for fear of being declared impure by the Law just as other men,[42] is it not much more fitting that the ministers of Jesus Christ, who offer every day the Eucharistic Sacrifice, possess perfect chastity? St. Peter Damian, exhorting priests to perfect continence, asks: "If Our Redeemer so loved the flower of unimpaired modesty that not only was He born from a virginal womb, but was also cared for by a virgin nurse even when He was still an infant crying in the cradle, by whom, I ask, does He wish His body to be handled now that He reigns, immense, in heaven?"[43]

It is first and foremost for the foregoing reasons that, according to the teaching of the Church, holy virginity surpasses marriage in excellence. Our Divine Redeemer had already given it to His disciples as a counsel for a more perfect life.[44] St. Paul, after having said that the father who gives his daughter in marriage "does well," adds immediately "and he that giveth her not, doth better."[45] Several times in the course of his comparison between marriage and virginity the Apostle reveals his mind, and especially in these words: "for I would that all men were even as myself. . . . But I say to the unmarried and to widows: it is good for them if they so continue, even as I."[46] Virginity is preferable to marriage then, as We have said, above all else because it has a higher aim:[47] that is to say, it is a very efficacious means for devoting oneself wholly to the service of God, while the heart of married persons will always remain more or less "divided."[48]

41 Cf. the encyclical letter *Ad catholici sacerdotii fastigium*, *AAS*, XXVIII (1936), 24 f.

42 Cf. *Levit.*, 15:16 f.; 22:4; *I Kings*, 21:5 ff. Cf. Pope St. Siricius, *Ep. ad Himer.*, 7. *MPL*, LVI, 558 f.

43 St. Peter Damian, *De coelibatu sacerdotum*, c. 3. *MPL*, CXLV, 384.

44 Cf. *Matt.*, 19:10 f. 45 *I Cor.*, 7:38. 46 *I Cor.*, 7:7 f.; cf. vv. 1, 26.

47 Cf. St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, IIa-IIae, q. 152, aa. 3f.

48 Cf. *I Cor.*, 7:33.

Turning next to the fruitful effects of virginity, our appreciation of its value will be enhanced; for "by the fruit the tree is known."[49]

We feel the deepest joy at the thought of the innumerable army of virgins and apostles who, from the first centuries of the Church up to our own day, have given up marriage to devote themselves more easily and fully to the salvation of their neighbor for the love of Christ, and have thus been enabled to undertake and carry through admirable works of religion and charity. We by no means wish to detract from the merits and apostolic fruits of the active members of Catholic Action: by their zealous efforts they can often touch souls that priests and religious cannot gain. Nevertheless, works of charity are for the most part the field of action of consecrated persons. These generous souls are to be found laboring among men of every age and condition, and when they fall, worn out or sick, they bequeath their sacred mission to others who take their place. Hence it often happens that a child, immediately after birth, is placed in the care of consecrated persons, who supply in so far as they can for a mother's love; at the age of reason he is entrusted to educators who see to his Christian instruction together with the development of his mind and the formation of his character; if he is sick, the child or adult will find nurses moved by the love of Christ who will care for him with unwearying devotion; the orphan, the person fallen into material destitution or moral abjection, the prisoner, will not be abandoned. Priests, religious, consecrated virgins will see in him a suffering member of Christ's Mystical Body, and recall the words of the Divine Redeeemer: "For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in; naked, and you covered me; sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came to me. . . . Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me."[50] Who can ever praise enough the missionaries who toil for the conversion of the pagan multitudes, exiles from their native country, or the nuns who render them indispensable assistance? To each and every one We gladly apply these words of Our Apostolic Exhortation, "Menti Nostrae": ". . . by this law of celibacy the priest not only does not abdicate his paternity, but

[49] *Matt.*, 12: 33.

[50] *Matt.*, 25: 35 f., 40.

increases it immensely, for he begets not for an earthly and transitory life but for the heavenly and eternal one."[51]

The fruit of virginity is not only in these external works, to which it allows one to devote oneself more easily and fully, but also in the earnest prayer offered for others and the trials willingly and generously endured for their sake, which are other very perfect forms of charity toward one's neighbor. To such also the servants and spouses of Christ, especially those who live within the convent or monastery walls, have consecrated their whole lives.

Finally, virginity consecrated to Christ is in itself such an evidence of faith in the kingdom of heaven, such a proof of love for our Divine Redeemer, that there is little wonder if it bears abundant fruits of sanctity. Innumerable are the virgins and apostles vowed to perfect chastity who are the honor of the Church by the lofty sanctity of their lives. In truth, virginity gives souls a force of spirit capable of leading them even to martyrdom, if needs be: such is the clear lesson of history which proposes a whole host of virgins to our admiration, from Agnes of Rome to Maria Goretti.

Virginity fully deserves the name of angelic virtue, which St. Cyprian writing to virgins affirms: "What we are to be, you have already commenced to be. You already possess in this world the glory of the resurrection; you pass through the world without suffering its contagion. In preserving virgin chastity, you are the equals of the angels of God."[52] To souls, restless for a purer life or inflamed with the desire to possess the kingdom of heaven, virginity offers itself as "a pearl of great price," for which one "sells all that he has, and buys it."[53] Married people and even those who are captives of vice, at the contact of virgin souls, often admire the splendor of their transparent purity, and feel themselves moved to rise above the pleasures of sense. When St. Thomas states "that to virginity is awarded the tribute of the highest beauty,"[54] it is because its example is captivating: and, besides, by their perfect chastity do not all these men and women give a

[51] *AAS,* XLII (1950), 663.

[52] St. Cyprian, *De habitu virginum, 22. MPL,* IV, 462; Cf. St. Ambrose, *De virginibus,* lib. 1, c. 8, n. 52. *MPL,* XVI, 202.

[53] *Matt.,* 13: 46. [54] St. Thomas, *Summa theol.,* IIa-IIae, q. 152, a. 5.

striking proof that the mastery of the spirit over the body is the result of a divine assistance and the sign of proven virtue?

Worthy of special consideration is the reflection that the most delicate fruit of virginity consists in this, that virgins make tangible, as it were, the perfect virginity of their mother, the Church, and the sanctity of her intimate union with Christ. In the ceremony of the consecration of virgins, the consecrating prelate prays God: "that there may exist more noble souls who disdain the marriage which consists in the bodily union of man and woman, but desire the mystery it enshrines, who reject its practice while loving its mystic signification."[55]

The greatest glory of virgins is undoubtedly to be the living images of the perfect integrity of the union between the Church and her Divine Spouse. For this society founded by Christ it is a profound joy that virgins should be the marvellous sign of its sanctity and fecundity, as St. Cyprian so well expresses it: "They are the flower of the Church, the beauty and ornament of spiritual grace, a subject of joy, a perfect and unsullied homage of praise and honor, the image of God corresponding to the sanctity of the Lord, the most illustrious portion of Christ's flock. In them the glorious fecundity of our mother, the Church, finds expression and she rejoices; the more the number of virgins increases, the greater is this mother's joy."[56]

II.

This doctrine of the excellence of virginity and of celibacy and of their superiority over the married state was, as We have already said, revealed by our Divine Redeemer and by the Apostle of the Gentiles; so too, it was solemnly defined as a dogma of divine faith by the holy Council of Trent,[57] and explained in the same way by all the holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church. Finally, We and Our Predecessors have often expounded it and earnestly advocated it whenever occasion offered. But recent attacks on this traditional doctrine of the Church, the danger they constitute, and the harm they do to the souls of the faithful lead Us, in fulfilment of the duties of Our charge, to take up the matter once

[55] *Pontificale Romanum, De benedictione et consecratione virginum.*
[56] St. Cyprian, *De habitu virginum*, 3. *MPL*, IV, 443.
[57] Session 24, canon 10.

again in this Encyclical Letter, and to reprove these errors which are so often propounded under a specious appearance of truth.

First of all, it is against common sense, which the Church always holds in esteem, to consider the sexual instinct as the most important and the deepest of human tendencies, and to conclude from this that man cannot restrain it for his whole life without danger to his vital nervous system, and consequently without injuring the harmony of his personality.

As St. Thomas very rightly observes, the deepest natural instinct is the instinct of conservation; the sexual instinct comes second. In addition, it is for the rational inclination, which is the distinguishing privilege of our nature, to regulate these fundamental instincts and by dominating to ennoble them.[58]

It is, alas, true that the sin of Adam has caused a deep disturbance in our corporal faculties and our passions, so that they wish to gain control of the life of the senses and even of the spirit, obscuring our reason and weakening our will. But Christ's grace is given us, especially by the sacraments, to help us to keep our bodies in subjection and to live by the spirit.[59] The virtue of chastity does not mean that we are insensible to the urge of concupiscence, but that we subordinate it to reason and the law of grace, by striving wholeheartedly after what is noblest in human and Christian life.

In order to acquire this perfect mastery of the spirit over the senses, it is not enough to refrain from acts directly contrary to chastity, but it is necessary also generously to renounce anything that may offend this virtue nearly or remotely; at such a price will the soul be able to reign fully over the body and lead its spiritual life in peace and liberty. Who then does not see, in the light of Catholic principles, that perfect chastity and virginity, far from harming the normal unfolding of man or woman, on the contrary endow them with the highest moral nobility.

We have recently with sorrow censured the opinion of those who contend that marriage is the only means of assuring the natural development and perfection of the human personality.[60] For there are those who maintain that the grace of the sacrament,

[58] Cf. St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, Ia-IIae, q. 94, a. 2.

[59] Cf. *Gal.*, 5:25; *I Cor.*, 9:27.

[60] Cf. *Allocutio ad moderatrices supremas ordinum et institutorum religiosorum*, Sept. 15, 1952. *AAS*, XLIV (1952), 824.

conferred ex opere operato, renders the use of marriage so holy as to be a fitter instrument than virginity for uniting souls with God; for marriage is a sacrament, but not virginity. We denounce this doctrine as a dangerous error. Certainly, the sacrament grants the married couple the grace to accomplish holily the duties of their married state, and it strengthens the bonds of mutual affection that unite them; but the purpose of its institution was not to make the employment of marriage the means, most suitable in itself, for uniting the souls of the husband and wife with God by the bonds of charity.[61]

Or rather does not the Apostle Paul admit that they have the right of abstaining for a time from the use of marriage, so that they may be more free for prayer,[62] precisely because such abstinence gives greater freedom to the soul which wishes to give itself over to spiritual thoughts and prayer to God?

Finally, it may not be asserted, as some do, that the "mutual help,"[63] which is sought in Christian Marriage, is a more effective aid in striving for personal sanctity than the solitude of the heart, as they term it, of virgins and celibates. For although all those who have embraced a life of perfect chastity have deprived themselves of the expression of human love permitted in the married state, nonetheless it cannot thereby be affirmed that because of this privation they have diminished and despoiled the human personality. For they receive from the Giver of heavenly gifts something spiritual which far exceeds that "mutual help" which husband and wife confer on each other. They consecrate themselves to Him Who is their source, and Who shares with them His divine life, and thus personality suffers no loss, but gains immensely. For who, more than the virgin, can apply to himself that marvelous phrase of the Apostle Paul: "I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me."[64]

For this reason the Church has most wisely held that the celibacy of her priests must be retained; she knows it is and will be a source of spiritual graces by which they will be ever more closely united with God.

[61] Cf. the Holy Office decree *De matrimonii finibus,* April 1, 1944. *AAS,* XXXVI (1944), 103.

[62] Cf. *I Cor.,* 7: 5. [63] Cf. *CIC,* can. 1013, sect. 1. [64] *Gal.,* 2: 20.

We feel it opportune, moreover, to touch somewhat briefly here on the error of those who, in order to turn boys and girls away from Seminaries and Religious Institutes, strive to impress upon their minds that the Church today has a greater need of the help and of the profession of Christian virtue on the part of those who, united in marriage, lead a life together with others in the world, than of priests and consecrated virgins, who, because of their vow of chastity, are, as it were, withdrawn from human society. No one can fail to see, Venerable Brothers, how utterly false and harmful is such an opinion.

Of course, it is not Our intention to deny that Catholic spouses, because of the example of their Christian life, can, wherever they live and whatever be their circumstances, produce rich and salutary fruits as a witness to their virtue. Yet, whoever for this reason argues that it is preferable to live in matrimony than to consecrate oneself completely to God, without doubt perverts the right order. Indeed We earnestly wish, Venerable Brothers, that those who have already contracted marriage, or desire to enter this state, be properly taught their serious obligation not only to educate properly and carefully whatever children they have or will have, but also to help others, within their capacity, by the testimony of their faith and the example of their virtue. And yet, as Our duty demands, We cannot but censure all those who strive to turn young people away from the Seminary or Religious Orders and Institutes, and from the taking of sacred vows, persuading them that they can, if joined in marriage, as fathers and mothers of families pursue a greater spiritual good by an open and public profession of their Christian life. Certainly their conduct would be more proper and correct, if, instead of trying to distract from a life of virginity those young men and women, who desire to give themselves to the service of God, too few alas today, they were to exhort with all the zeal at their command the vast numbers of those who live in wedlock to promote apostolic works in the ranks of the laity. On this point, Ambrose fittingly writes: "To sow the seeds of perfect purity and to arouse a desire for virginity has always belonged to the function of the priesthood."[65]

We think it necessary, moreover, to warn that it is altogether false to assert that those who are vowed to perfect chastity are

[65] St. Ambrose, *De virginitate*, c. 5, n. 26. *MPL*, XVI, 272.

practically outside the community of men. Are not consecrated virgins, who dedicate their lives to the service of the poor and the sick, without making any distinction as to race, social rank, or religion, are not these virgins united intimately with their miseries and sorrows, and affectionately drawn to them, as though they were their mothers? And does not the priest likewise, moved by the example of his Divine Master, perform the function of a good shepherd, who knows his flock and calls them by name?[66] Indeed it is from that perfect chastity which they cultivate that priests and religious men and women find the motive for giving themselves to all, and love all men with the love of Christ. And they too, who live the contemplative life, precisely because they not only offer to God prayer and supplication but immolate themselves for the salvation of others, accomplish much for the good of the Church; indeed, when in circumstances like the present they dedicate themselves to works of charity and of the apostolate, according to the norms which We laid down in the Apostolic Letter "Sponsa Christi,"[67] they are very much to be praised; nor can they be said to be separated from contact with men, since they labor for their spiritual progress in this twofold way.

III.

From the Church's teaching on the excellence of virginity, let Us now come, Venerable Brothers, to some points which are of practical application.

In the first place, it must be clearly stated that because virginity should be esteemed as something more perfect than marriage, it does not follow that it is necessary for Christian perfection.

Holiness of life can really be attained even without a chastity that is consecrated to God. Witness to this are the many holy men and women who are publicly honored by the Church, and who were faithful spouses and stood out as an example of excellent fathers and mothers; indeed it is not rare to find married people who are very earnest in their efforts for Christian perfection.

It should be pointed out, also, that God does not urge all Christians to virginity, as the Apostle Paul teaches us with these words: "Now concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord;

[66] Cf. *John*, 10: 14, 3.

[67] Cf. *AAS*, XLIII (1951), 20.

but I give counsel."[68] We are, therefore, merely invited by counsel to embrace perfect chastity, as something which can lead those "to whom it is given"[69] more safely and successfully to the evangelical perfection they seek, and to the conquest of the kingdom of heaven. Wherefore it is "not imposed, but proposed," as St. Ambrose so aptly observed.[70]

Hence, perfect chastity demands, first, a free choice by Christians before they consecrate themselves to God and then, from God, supernatural help and grace.[71] Our Divine Redeemer Himself has taught us this in the following words: "All men take not this word, but they to whom it is given. . . . He that can take it, let him take it."[72] St. Jerome, intently pondering this sacred phrase of Jesus Christ, exhorts all "that each one study his own powers, whether he can fulfill the precepts of virginal modesty. For of itself chastity is charming and attractive to all. But one's forces must be considered, that he who can may take it. The Lord's word is as it were an exhortation, stirring on His soldiers to the prize of purity. He that can take it, let him take it: let him who can, fight, conquer and receive his reward."[73]

For virginity is a difficult virtue; that one be able to embrace it there is needed not only a strong and declared determination of completely and perpetually abstaining from those legitimate pleasures derived from marriage; but also a constant vigilance and struggle to contain and dominate rebellious movements of body and soul, a flight from the importunings of this world, a struggle to conquer the wiles of Satan. How true is that saying of Chrysostom: "the root, and the flower, too, of virginity is a crucified life."[74] For virginity, according to Ambrose, is as a sacrificial offering, and the virgin "an oblation of modesty, a victim of chastity."[75] Indeed, St. Methodius, Bishop of Olympus, compares virgins to martyrs,[76] and St. Gregory the Great teaches that

[68] *I Cor.*, 7:25. [69] *Matt.*, 19:11.

[70] St. Ambrose, *De viduis*, c. 12, n. 72. *MPL*, XVI, 256; Cf. St. Cyprian, *De habitu virginum*, c. 23. *MPL*, IV, 463.

[71] Cf. *I Cor.*, 7:7. [72] *Matt.*, 19:11 f.

[73] St. Jerome, *Comment. in Matt.*, 19:12. *MPL*, XXVI, 136.

[74] St. John Chrysostom, *De virginitate*, 80. *MPG*, XLVIII, 592.

[75] St. Ambrose, *De virginitate*, lib. 1, c. 11, n. 65. *MPL*, XVI, 206.

[76] Cf. St. Methodius, *Convivium decem virginum, orat.* 7, c. 3. *MPG*, XVIII, 128 f.

perfect chastity substitutes for martyrdom: "Now, though the era of persecution is gone, yet our peace has its martyrdom, because though we bend not the neck to the sword, yet with a spiritual weapon we slay fleshly desires in our hearts."[77] Hence a chastity, dedicated to God demands strong and noble souls, souls ready to do battle and conquer "for the sake of the kingdom of heaven."[78]

Prior, therefore, to entering upon this most difficult path, all who by experience know they are too weak in spirit should humbly heed this warning of Paul the Apostle: "But if they do not contain themselves, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to be burnt."[79] For many, undoubtedly, the burden of perpetual continence is a heavier one than they should be persuaded to shoulder. And so priests, who are under grave obligation of helping by their advice young people who declare they are drawn by some movement of soul to aspire to the priesthood or enter religious life, must urge them to ponder the matter carefully, lest they enter a way which they cannot hope to follow sturdily and happily to its end. They should prudently examine the fitness of candidates, even obtaining, as often as is proper, the opinion of experts; and then, if serious doubt remains, especially if it is based on past experience, they should make use of their authority to make candidates cease from seeking a state of perfect chastity, nor should these latter ever be admitted to Holy Orders, or to religious profession.

And yet, although chastity pledged to God is a difficult virtue, those who after serious consideration generously answer Christ's invitation and do all in their power to attain it can perfectly and faithfully preserve it. For since they have eagerly embraced the state of virginity or celibacy, they will certainly receive from God that gift of grace through whose help they will be able to carry out their promise. Wherefore, if there are any "who do not feel they have the gift of chastity even though they have vowed it,"[80] let them not declare they cannot fulfill their obligations in this matter. "For," says the Council of Trent, quoting St. Augustine, " 'God does not command the impossible, but in commanding serves notice

[77] St. Gregory the Great, *Homilies on the Gospels,* lib. 1, hom. 3, n. 4. *MPL,* LXXVI, 1089.

[78] *Matt.,* 19:12.

[79] *I Cor.,* 7:9.

[80] Cf. the Council of Trent, sess. 24, can. 9.

that one do what he can, and pray for what he cannot,'[81] and He helps us to accomplish it."[82] This truth, so full of encouragement, We recall to those also whose will has been weakened by upset nerves and whom some doctors, sometimes even Catholic doctors, are too quick to persuade that they should be freed from such an obligation, advancing the specious reason that they cannot preserve their chastity without suffering some harm to their mental balance. How much more useful and opportune it is to help the infirm of this type to strengthen their will, and to advise them that not even to them is chastity impossible, according to the word of the Apostle: "God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able: but will make also with temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it."[83]

Here are the helps, commended to us by our Divine Redeemer, by which we may efficaciously protect our virtue: constant vigilance, whereby we diligently do all that we can; moreover, constant prayer to God, asking for what we cannot attain by ourselves, because of our weakness. "Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."[84] A vigilance which guards every moment of our lives and every type of circumstance is absolutely necessary for us: "For the flesh lusteth against the spirit: and the spirit against the flesh."[85] But if anyone grants however little to the enticements of the flesh, he will see himself quickly pulled toward those "works of the flesh" which the Apostle lists,[86] the basest and ugliest vices of man.

Hence we must watch particularly over the movements of our passions and of our senses, and so control them by voluntary discipline in our lives and by bodily mortification that we render them obedient to right reason and God's law: "And they that are Christ's have crucified their flesh, with the vices and concupiscences."[87] The Apostle of the Gentiles says this about himself: "But I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection: lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway."[88] All holy men and women have most carefully guarded the movements of their senses and their passions, and at times

[81] Cf. St. Augustine, *De natura et gratia*, c. 43, n. 50. *MPL*, XLIV, 271.
[82] The Council of Trent, sess. 6, can. 11.
[83] *I Cor.*, 10:13. [84] *Matt.*, 26:41. [85] *Gal.*, 5:17.
[86] Cf. *Gal.*, 5:19 ff. [87] *Gal.*, 5:24. [88] *I Cor.*, 9:27.

have very harshly crushed them, in keeping with the teaching of the Divine Master: "But I say to you, that whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart. And if thy right eye scandalize thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee. For it is expedient for thee that one of thy members should perish, rather than that thy whole body be cast into hell."[89] It is abundantly clear that with this warning Our Saviour demands of us above all that we never consent to any sin, even internally, and that we steadfastly remove far from us anything that can even slightly tarnish the beautiful virtue of purity. In this matter no diligence, no severity can be considered exaggerated. If ill health or other reasons do not allow one heavier corporal austerities, yet they never free one from vigilance and internal self-control.

On this point it should be noted, as indeed the Fathers[90] and Doctors[91] of the Church teach, that we can more easily struggle against and repress the wiles of evil and the enticements of the passions if we do not struggle directly against them, but rather flee from them as best we may. For the preserving of chastity, according to the teaching of Jerome, flight is more effective than open warfare: "Therefore I flee, lest I be overcome."[92] Flight must be understood in this sense, that not only do we diligently avoid occasions of sin, but especially that in struggles of this kind we lift our minds and hearts to God, intent above all on Him to Whom we have vowed our virginity. "Look upon the beauty of your Lover,"[93] St. Augustine tells us.

Flight and alert vigilance, by which we carefully avoid the occasions of sin, have always been considered by holy men and women as the most effective method of combat in this matter; today however it does not seem that everybody holds the same opinion. Some indeed claim that all Christians, and the clergy in particular, should not be "separated from the world" as in the past, but

[89] *Matt.*, 5:28 f.

[90] Cf. St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermo 41*, in Dom Morin's edition, published at Maredsous, in 1937, I, 172.

[91] Cf. St. Thomas, *In Epist. I ad Cor.*, c. 6, lect. 3; St. Francis de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, Part IV, chapter 7; St. Alphonsus Liguori, *The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, c. 1, n. 16; c. 15, n. 10.

[92] St. Jerome, *Contra Vigilantium*, 16. *MPL*, XXIII, 352.

[93] St. Augustine, *De sancta virginitate*, c. 54. *MPL*, XL, 428.

should be "close to the world"; therefore they should "take the risk" and put their chastity to the test in order to show whether or not they have the strength to resist; therefore, they say, let young clerics see everything so that they may accustom themselves to gaze at everything with equanimity, and thus render themselves immune to all temptations. For this reason they readily grant young clerics the liberty to turn their eyes in any direction without the slightest concern for modesty; they may attend motion pictures, even those forbidden by ecclesiastical censorship; they may peruse obscene periodicals; they may read novels which are listed in the Index of forbidden books or prohibited by the Natural Law. All this they allow because today the multitudes are fed by this kind of amusement and publication and because those who are minded to help them should understand their way of thinking and feeling. But it is easily seen that this method of educating and training the clergy to acquire the sanctity proper to their calling is wrong and harmful. For "he that loveth danger shall perish in it";[94] most appropriate in this connection is the admonition of Augustine: "Do not say that you have a chaste mind if your eyes are unchaste, because an unchaste eye betrays an unchaste heart."[95]

No doubt this pernicious method is based upon serious confusion of thought. Indeed Christ Our Lord asserted of His Apostles, "I have sent them into the world";[96] yet previously He had said of them, "They are not of the world, as I also am not of the world,"[97] and He had prayed to His Heavenly Father in these words, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from evil."[98] Motivated by the same principles, and in order to protect priests from temptations to evil, to which all those are ordinarily subject who are in intimate contact with the world, the Church has promulgated appropriate and wise laws,[99] whose purpose is to safeguard sacerdotal sanctity from the cares and pleasures of the laity.

[94] *Ecclus.*, 3: 27.

[95] St. Augustine, *Epist.* 211, n. 10. *MPL*, XXXIII, 961.

[96] *John*, 17: 18. [97] *John*, 17: 16. [98] *John*, 17: 15.

[99] Cf. *CIC*, canons 124-42; Blessed Pius X, the exhortation *Haerent animo*, *Acta sanctae sedis*, XLI (1908), 565-73; Pope Pius XI, the encyclical *Ad catholici sacerdotii fastigium*, *AAS*, XXVIII (1936), 23-30; Pope Pius XII, the apostolic exhortation *Menti nostrae*, *AAS*, XLII (1950), 692 ff.

All the more reason why the young clergy, because they are to be trained in the spiritual life, in sacerdotal and religious perfection, must be separated from the tumult of the world before entering the lists of combat; for long years they must remain in a Seminary or Scholasticate where they receive a sound and careful education which provides them with a gradual approach to and a prudent knowledge of those problems which our times have brought to the fore, in accordance with the norms which We established in the Apostolic Exhortation "Menti Nostrae."[100] What gardener would expose young plants, choice indeed but weak, to violent storms in order that they might give proof of the strength which they have not yet acquired? Seminarians and scholastics are surely to be considered like young and weak plants who must still be protected and gradually trained to resist and to fight.

The educators of the young clergy would render a more valuable and useful service, if they would inculcate in youthful minds the precepts of Christian modesty, which is so important for the preservation of perfect chastity and which is truly called the prudence of chastity. For modesty foresees threatening danger, forbids us to expose ourselves to risks, demands the avoidance of those occasions which the imprudent do not shun. It does not like impure or loose talk, it shrinks from the slightest immodesty, it carefully avoids suspect familiarity with persons of the other sex, since it brings the soul to show due reverence to the body, as being a member of Christ[101] and the temple of the Holy Spirit.[102] He who possesses the treasure of Christian modesty abominates every sin of impurity and instantly flees whenever he is tempted by its seductions.

Modesty will moreover suggest and provide suitable words for parents and educators by which the youthful conscience will be formed in matters of chastity. "Wherefore," as We said in a recent address, "this modesty is not to be so understood as to be equivalent to a perpetual silence on this subject, nor as allowing no place for sober and cautious discussion about these matters in

[100] Cf. *AAS*, XLII (1950), 690 f.

[101] Cf. *I Cor.*, 6:15.

[102] *I Cor.*, 6:19.

imparting moral instruction."[103] In modern times, however, there are some teachers and educators who too frequently think it their duty to initiate innocent boys and girls into the secrets of human generation in such a way as to offend their sense of shame. But in this matter a just temperance and moderation must be used, as Christian modesty demands.

This modesty is nourished by the fear of God, that filial fear which is founded on the virtue of profound Christian humility, and which creates in us utter abhorrence for the slightest sin, as Our predecessor, St. Clement I, stated in these words, "He who is chaste in flesh should not be proud, for he should know that he owes the gift of continence to another."[104] How important Christian humility is for the protection of virginity, no one perhaps has taught more clearly than Augustine. "Because perpetual continence, and virginity above all, is a great good in the saints of God, extreme vigilance must be exercised lest it be corrupted by pride. . . . The more clearly I see the greatness of this gift, the more truly do I fear lest it be plundered by thieving pride. No one therefore protects virginity, but God Himself Who bestowed it: and 'God is charity.'[105] The guardian therefore of virginity is charity; the habitat of this guardian is humility."[106]

Moreover there is another argument worthy of attentive consideration: to preserve chastity unstained neither vigilance nor modesty suffice. Those helps must also be used which entirely surpass the powers of nature, namely prayer to God, the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist, a fervent devotion to the most holy Mother of God.

Never should it be forgotten that perfect chastity is a great gift of God. For this reason Jerome wrote these succinct words, "It is given to those,[107] who have asked for it, who have desired it, who have worked to receive it. For it will be given to everyone

[103] The allocution *Magis quam mentis,* Sept. 23, 1951. *AAS,* XLIII (1951), 736.

[104] St. Clement of Rome, *Ad Cor.,* XXXVIII, 2. In the Funk-Diekamp edition of the *Patres apostolici,* I, 148.

[105] *I John,* 4:8.

[106] St. Augustine, *De sancta virginitate,* cc. 33, 51. *MPL,* XL, 415. Cf. *ibid.,* cc. 31 f., 38. *MPL,* XL, 412-15, 419.

[107] Cf. *Matt.,* 19:11.

who asks, the seeker will find, to the importunate it will be opened."[108] Ambrose adds that the constant fidelity of virgins to their Divine Spouse depends upon prayer.[109] With that fervent piety for which he was noted St. Alphonsus Liguori taught that there is no help more necessary and certain for conquering temptations against the beautiful virtue of chastity than instant recourse to God in prayer.[110]

To prayer must be added frequent and fervent use of the Sacrament of Penance which, as a spiritual medicine, purifies and heals us; likewise it is necessary to receive the Eucharist, which, as Our predecessor of happy memory Leo XIII asserted, is the best remedy against lust.[111] The more pure and chaste is a soul, the more it hungers for this bread, from which it derives strength to resist all temptations to sins of impurity, and by which it is more intimately united with the Divine Spouse; "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood, abides in me and I in him."[112]

The eminent way to protect and nourish an unsullied and perfect chastity, as proven by experience time and again throughout the course of centuries, is solid and fervent devotion to the Virgin Mother of God. In a certain way all other helps are contained in this devotion; there is no doubt that whoever is sincerely and earnestly animated by this devotion is salutarily inspired to constant vigilance, to continual prayer, to receive the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist. Therefore in a paternal way We exhort all priests, religious men and women, to entrust themselves to the special protection of the holy Mother of God who is the Virgin of virgins and the "teacher of virginity," as Ambrose says,[113] and the most powerful Mother of those in particular who have vowed and consecrated themselves to the service of God.

That virginity owes its origin to Mary is the testimony of Athanasius,[114] and Augustine clearly teaches that "The dignity of

[108] Cf. *Matt.*, 7 : 8; St. Jerome, *Comment. in Matt.*, 19 : 8. *MPL*, XXVI, 135.

[109] Cf. St. Ambrose, *De virginibus*, lib. 3, c. 4, nn. 18 ff. *MPL*, XVI, 225.

[110] Cf. St. Alphonsus Liguori, *Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ*, c. 17, nn. 7-16.

[111] Leo XIII, in the encyclical *Mirae caritatis*, May 28, 1902. *Acta Leonis XIII*, XXII, 1902 f.

[112] *John*, 6 : 57.

[113] St. Ambrose, *De institutione virginis*, c. 6, n. 46. *MPL*, XVI, 320.

[114] Cf. St. Athanasius, *De virginitate*, edited by Lefort, in *Museon*, XLII (1929), 247.

virginity began with the Mother of the Lord."[115] Pursuing the ideas of Athanasius,[116] Ambrose holds up the life of the Virgin Mary as the model of virgins. "Imitate her, my daughters . . . ![117] Let Mary's life be for you like the portrayal of virginity, for from her, as though from a mirror, is reflected the beauty of chastity and the ideal of virtue. See in her the pattern of your life, for in her, as though in a model, manifest teachings of goodness show what you should correct, what you should copy and what preserve. . . . She is the image of virginity. For such was Mary that her life alone suffices for the instruction of all. . . .[118] Therefore let holy Mary guide your way of life."[119] "Her grace was so great that it not only preserved in her the grace of virginity, but bestowed the grace of chastity upon those upon whom she gazed."[120] How true is the saying of Ambrose, "Oh the richness of the virginity of Mary"![121] Because of this richness it will be very useful for religious men and women and for priests of our day to contemplate the virginity of Mary, in order that they may more faithfully and perfectly practice the chastity of their calling.

But it is not enough, beloved sons and daughters, to meditate on the virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary: with absolute confidence fly to her and obey the counsel of St. Bernard, "Let us seek grace and seek it through Mary."[122] In a special way entrust to her during the Marian Year the care of your spiritual life and perfection, imitating the example of Jerome who asserted, "My virginity is dedicated in Mary and to Christ."[123]

IV.

In the midst of the grave difficulties with which the Church must contend today, the heart of the Supreme Pastor is greatly comforted, Venerable Brothers, when We see that virginity, which

[115] St. Augustine, *Serm.* 51, c. 16, n. 26. *MPL,* XXXVIII, 348.
[116] Cf. St. Athanasius, *ibid.,* 244.
[117] St. Ambrose, *De institutione virginis,* c. 14, n. 87. *MPL,* XVI, 328.
[118] St. Ambrose, *De virginibus,* lib. 2, c. 2, nn. 6, 15. *MPL,* XVI, 208, 210.
[119] *Ibid.,* c. 3, n. 19. *MPL,* XVI, 211.
[120] St. Ambrose, *De institutione virginis,* c. 7, n. 50. *MPL,* XVI, 319.
[121] *Ibid.,* c. 13, n. 81. *MPL,* XVI, 339.
[122] St. Bernard, *In nativitate B. Mariae Virginis, Sermo de aquaeductu,* n. 8, *MPL,* CLXXXIII, 441 f.
[123] St. Jerome, *Epist.* 2, n. 18. *MPL,* XXII, 405.

is flourishing throughout the world, is held in great honor and repute in the present as it was in past centuries, even though, as We have said, it is being attacked by errors which, We trust, will soon be dispelled and pass away.

Nevertheless We do not deny that this Our joy is overshadowed by a certain sorrow since We learn that in not a few countries the number of vocations to the priesthood and to the religious life is constantly decreasing. We have already given the principal reasons which account for this fact and there is no reason why We should return to them now. Rather do We trust that those educators of youth, who have succumbed to errors in this matter, will repudiate them as soon as they are detected, and will consequently seriously resolve both to correct them and to do what they can to provide every help for the youth entrusted to their care who feel themselves called by divine grace to aspire to the priesthood or to embrace the religious life, in order that they may be able to reach so noble a goal. May God grant that new and larger ranks of priests, religious men and women, equal in number and virtue to the current necessities of the Church, may soon go forth to cultivate the vineyard of the Lord.

Moreover, as the obligation of Our Apostolic Office demands, We urge fathers and mothers to offer willingly to the service of God those of their children who are called to it. But if this be a source of trouble, sorrow or regret, let them seriously meditate upon the admonition which Ambrose gave to the mothers of Milan. "The majority of the young women whom I knew wanted to be virgins were forbidden to leave by their mothers. . . . If your daughters want to love a man, the laws allow them to choose whom they will. But those who have a right to choose a man, have no right to choose God?"[124]

Let parents consider what a great honor it is to see their son elevated to the priesthood, or their daughter consecrate her virginity to her Divine Spouse. In regard to consecrated virgins, the Bishop of Milan writes, "You have heard, parents, that a virgin is a gift of God, the oblation of parents, the priesthood of chastity. The virgin is a mother's victim, by whose daily sacrifice divine anger is appeased."[125]

[124] St. Ambrose, *De virginibus*, lib. 1, c. 10, n. 58. *MPL*, XVI, 205.
[125] *Ibid.*, c. 7, n. 32. *MPL*, XVI, 198.

Before We come to the end of this Encyclical Letter, We wish, Venerable Brothers, to turn Our mind and heart in a special manner to those men and women, who, vowed to the service of God, are suffering bitter and terrible persecutions in not a few countries. Let them imitate the example of the consecrated virgins of the early Church who with courageous and indomitable hearts suffered martyrdom for the sake of their virginity.[126]

May all who have vowed to serve Christ bravely persevere "even to death."[127] May they realize that their pains, sufferings and prayers are of great value in the sight of God for the restoration of His Kingdom in their countries and in the universal Church; may they be most certain that those "who follow the Lamb whither he goeth,"[128] will sing forever a "new canticle,"[129] which no one else can sing.

Our paternal heart is filled with compassion for priests, religious men and women, who are bravely professing their faith even to the extent of martyrdom; and not only for them, but for all those who in every part of the world are totally dedicated and consecrated to the divine service, We implore God with suppliant prayer to sustain, strengthen and console them. We earnestly invite each and every one of you, Venerable Brothers, and your faithful to pray with Us and to implore for all these souls the consolations, gifts and graces which they need from God.

Let the Apostolic Blessing, which with loving heart We impart to you, Venerable Brothers, to all priests and consecrated virgins, to those especially "who suffer persecution for justice's sake"[130] and to all your faithful, be a pledge of heavenly grace and a testimony of Our paternal benevolence.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, March 25th, Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 1954, in the sixteenth year of Our Pontificate.

PIUS PP. XII

[126] Cf. *ibid.*, lib. 2, c. 4, n. 32. *MPL*, XVI, 215 f.
[127] *Phil.*, 2:8. [128] *Apoc.*, 14:4. [129] *Apoc.*, 14:3. [130] *Matt.*, 5:10.

Book Reviews

PAPAL DOCUMENTS ON MARY. Compiled and arranged by Rt. Rev. Msgr. William J. Doheny, C.S.C., and Rev. Joseph P. Kelly. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1954. Pp. 270. $4.50.

To authors who open the archives and produce original sources, the reader is duly grateful. If, in addition, the sources are arranged for quick and easy use, his gratitude is the more pronounced.

Here for the first time, in one, attractive collection, there are now available in English all the important pronouncements regarding the Blessed Mother issued by the Popes during the last one hundred years.

The volume opens with *Ubi primum,* the encyclical Pope Pius IX published in 1849, preliminary to the dogmatic definition of the Immaculate Conception. The volume closes with the Prayer for the Marian Year, dated Nov. 21, 1953. Altogether, thirty-six documents comprise the collection—encyclicals, allocutions, apostolic letters, radio messages, apostolic constitutions and prayers—including *Ineffabilis Deus* and *Munificentissimus Deus.*

The collection offers several advantages. The first is that many documents published in foreign languages over a long period of time are now made readily accessible in translation in one handy volume. The second advantage is found in the translations themselves: they are readable, unequivocal, and—so far as this reviewer has been able to determine—they are accurate. Testing for accuracy, this reviewer compared the present translation of *Ineffabilis Deus* with the Latin original. The new translation, he is pleased to report, has none of the startling errors contained in the standard translation of *Ineffabilis* made some years ago—a translation which is still available in pamphlet form in the vertical files of many libraries.

The typography is unusually attractive, not always the case in a volume of this nature. One wonders, however, why the publisher failed to include an index.

To the authors, then—one of whom is an Associate Justice of the Sacred Roman Rota, the other a diocesan Visitor General for Religious—the reader will express his gratitude. The volume comes as a welcome addition to the literature on Mary during the Marian Year.

JOHN GAVIN NOLAN

PAUL THE APOSTLE. By Giuseppe Ricciotti. Translated by Alba I. Zizzamia. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1953. Pp. xi + 540. $7.50.

Neither the author nor the translator of this present work needs an introduction. Both names stand together in a *Life of Christ* where they fill identical roles. If G. Ricciotti and A. Zizzamia need no introduction, they need no special commendation either. The type of work that both do in their respective capacities is so well known that we have come to regard them beforehand as presenting something worthwhile and eminently well done.

Paul the Apostle is part of a series. As the author himself explains, it was natural that he "bring to a close the series that had evolved, although without a pre-established plan, that is, the *History of Israel* together with the translation of *Flavius Josephus* with a commentary, then the *Life of Christ,* and now finally *Paul the Apostle*" (p. vi). The present volume is a critical biography of St. Paul, not a complete and ordered exposition of the thought of the Apostle. And yet, because his thought was so much a manifestation of his spirit, it is understandable that the author should have drawn so abundantly from it in writing this biography of the Apostle.

The book falls into two large parts: *Introduction* and *Biography*. The first part, the *Introduction,* is rather an extended section (pp. 1-180), which serves a variety of purposes.

It proposes to introduce us to the world in which St. Paul lived. The geographical, cultural, intellectual and religious background are presented successively. Although men sometimes grow weary with such introductions and speak of irrelevant details, the author knows well enough that it is better to establish the background from the beginning so that the biography itself does not become cluttered up with digression after digression. That stage has been reached where one no longer need make an apology for presenting "background" material. It is well known that neither a man nor his writings can be judged adequately without knowing the world in which he lived. Of particular merit in this section is the chapter on the religious conditions of the first century A.D. For example, the summary on the philosophical origins of the mystery religions together with their respective tenets is just as well done as one will find anywhere.

In the second place, the introduction presents the literary aspects of a biography of St. Paul. Since all the sources for a life of the Apostle are in the New Testament, and since all the emphasis must be grounded on the supernatural character of his life, one would expect

those who deny the supernatural to express their doubt about the possibility and the actuality of the facts surrounding the life of St. Paul. In summary form the author gives the history of the criticism as presented by those who would not accept the Apostle as we know him from the writings of the New Testament. At the same time in this presentation we become aware that we may expect a true picture in the biographical section of this book because the predominant element in St. Paul's life, the supernatural, made the man. "He is a man suffused with the supernatural and set in a framework of miracles. . . . His progressive knowledge and understanding of Christ is a whole series of supernatural events, for it is the result of special revelations made to him by Christ" (p. 103). This is why, beyond recalling the history of the criticism which has developed around the writings and the life of St. Paul, there is a special chapter devoted to an exposition of the many charisms of early Christianity. As a point of departure for an explanation of these graces, the author attractively presents an imaginary liturgical celebration of the first century A.D. where anyone of these charisms might have taken place. The list as well as an explanation of each of these graces as they are mentioned by St. Paul form the core of this chapter.

Finally by way of introductory remarks we become acquainted with such topics as: Paul the writer, Paul's physical appearance, and Paul's health.

The biographical section (pp. 181-523) takes us from St. Paul's birth to his death in 67 A.D. Here the author relies entirely on the biblical data together with the interpretation which tradition has afforded and given to us of the biblical information. How well the introductory chapters have served their purpose may be seen from the innumerable cross references which are supplied by way of parenthetical references to particular numbers in the first section.

Happily in writing the biography the author does not merely record the external facts. The interpretation of those facts and the manner of presentation deserve special mention. We do become annoyed with writers who use their imagination to supply data that is fictional when they write about biblical men and women. But the use of the imagination by way of comparisons—this is another matter. This does not become a source of distraction and distortion but rather helps to clarify a situation, a picture. Thus the chapter on St. Paul's conversion begins with a description of the maiden voyage of the *Titanic* across the Atlantic. As it was stopped in its course, so also the Apostle. "The journey of the fiery Pharisee to Damascus morally speaking paralleled the voyage of the *Titanic*. The pilot, Paul, was unshakably sure of

himself, the master of his course, who had foreseen every eventuality. Suddenly, across his path, rose a white mountain and he rode headlong into it" (p. 206).

The biography has also an exegetical value. Many passages are fully interpreted and innumerable others are better understood in their proper setting. An Index of scriptural references (pp. 535-40) facilitates such a use of the book.

The outstanding quality of this life of St. Paul is the use of so much biblical material so well synthesized. The *Acts of the Apostles* and all fourteen epistles of St. Paul, with their facts and thought, are blended together to make an harmonious whole. If the author gives us a true picture of the Apostles' life, his times and his position in the early years of the Church, by way of a summary glance he also indicates what the Apostle means in the Church today. What remains of his work? "Today Christianity, in large measure, means Paul, just as human civilization in our era signifies in large measure Christianity. The truly civilized man, consciously or unconsciously, is today to some extent a disciple of Paul" (p. 506). This thought is developed in the final chapter.

As this is a translation, a word must be added about the work of the translator. The book is eminently readable; the choice of words as well as the happy turn of phrases make for delightful reading. An English-reading audience is abundantly appreciative.

ROBERT T. SIEBENECK, C.PPS.

SAINT AUGUSTINE: LETTERS. Vol. II (83-130). Translated by Sister Wilfrid Parsons, S.N.D. (The Fathers of the Church, Vol. XVIII.) New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1953. $5.00.

The far-flung empire of Rome, with the calls it made on its citizens for foreign service, naturally gave a great impetus to the writing of letters. Some of these letters, such as those of Cicero, were really personal correspondence of the sort to which we are accustomed, dealing with private affairs, with business matters, and with affairs of state. But in the hands of other writers, the letter developed into a mere literary genre: such are the rather artificial letters of Pliny the Younger. St. Augustine's letters fall into neither of these classes. There are no merely literary letters, and very few merely familiar letters in the list of his correspondence.

Although his letters are really addressed to and meant immediately for an actual person, they deal for the most part with dogmatic, moral, and philosophic matters. Some of them are brief; others are veritable

opuscula. Among the most interesting letters in the present collection, we might mention Letter 130, which, in twenty-five pages, answers the request of the widow Proba with a little treatise on vocal prayer. Letter 118 is yet more extensive: a certain Dioscorus ventured to ask St. Augustine to find time to answer some questions on the philosophical writings of Cicero. After rebuking his questioner's pride in classicism and his thoughtlessness in disturbing a busy Bishop with such needless questions, the Saint gives him a small treatise on Christianity and ancient wisdom, in thirty-two pages. Letter 93 devotes fifty pages to the Rogatists (a sect within the Donatists), treating of the question of the intervention of the civil authorities against the violence of the Circumcellions, and of the errors of Donatism in general. To Deogratias, a priest of Carthage who needed answers to six questions for a prospective convert, St. Augustine sent Letter 102, a document of twenty-nine pages.

Small wonder, then, that he found himself hard pressed to answer the classical questions of Dioscorus—what with governing a diocese, disputing with heretics, writing over a hundred larger works, and keeping up an extensive correspondence that required at times small treatises rather than mere letters.

The present volume contains forty-nine letters in all, written from 408-412 A.D. Of these, forty are by St. Augustine himself, and nine by his correspondents. Among those by other hands, we might note especially Letter 109, from Bishop Severus, a devoted disciple of St. Augustine, who caught his spirit so well as to be able to give us a line that St. Augustine himself might well have wished to have written: for he says of the love of God: ". . . no limit of love is laid upon us, since the limit itself is to love without limit" (p. 240).

We regret to say that the present translation is not always accurate. For example, on pp. 20-21, we find the following: "It is one question about the persecutions which you say you *suffered* even under our mildness . . . when your adherents individually *committed such gravely* unlawful acts, but baptism is another question, since we do not look to see where it is, but where it is validly" (italics added).

The two verbs in italics, *suffered* and *committed,* are actually in the present tense in Latin—nor should they be considered as historical presents, since the violence in question had not ceased at the time at which St. Augustine wrote. The words *such gravely* stand for the Latin *graviora:* hence the sense should have been that the Donatists are committing graver things than what they are suffering.

The following sentence on the same page misses the sense: "Wherever it is, it is *itself,* but the one who receives it is not *himself* wher-

ever he is" (italics added). St. Augustine is saying that Baptism is the same (is valid) even when received in a Donatist sect—but that it is not the same for a man to be in such a sect as to be in the Catholic Church. The words *itself* and *himself* stand for Latin, *ipsum* and *ipse*. If they are both translated by *same*, the sense will appear.

On p. 241, an entire clause has been omitted from the last two lines, the Latin: *cuius nos perpetuos debitores ostendit.*

The notes are a bit more sparse than what one might desire for the ready understanding of some passages. However, the translation is, for the most part, reasonably smooth.

WILLIAM G. MOST

POPE PIUS XI ON PRIESTLY LEARNING

Therefore, Venerable Brethren, it is necessary that the priest, even among the absorbing tasks of his charge, and ever with a view to it, should continue his theological studies with unremitting zeal. The knowledge acquired at the seminary is indeed a sufficient foundation with which to begin; but it must be grasped more thoroughly, and perfected by an ever-increasing knowledge and understanding of the sacred sciences. Herein is the source of effective preaching and of influence over the souls of others. Yet even more is required. The dignity of the office he holds, and the maintenance of a becoming respect and esteem among the people, which helps so much in his pastoral work, demand more than purely ecclesiastical learning. The priest must be graced by no less knowledge and culture than is usual among well-bred and well-educated people of his day. This is to say that he must be healthily modern, as is the Church, which is at home in all times and all places, and adapts itself to all; which blesses and furthers all healthy initiative and has no fear of the progress, even the most daring progress, of science, if only it be true science. Indeed, in all ages the Catholic clergy has distinguished itself in every field of human knowledge; in fact, in certain centuries it so took the lead in the field of learning that the word "cleric" became synonymous with "learned." The Church preserved and saved the treasures of ancient culture, which without her and her monasteries would have been almost entirely lost; and her most illustrious Doctors show that all human knowledge can help to throw light upon and to defend the Catholic faith.

—In his Encyclical Letter on the Catholic Priesthood (trans. Catholic Truth Society [London]), pp. 38 f.

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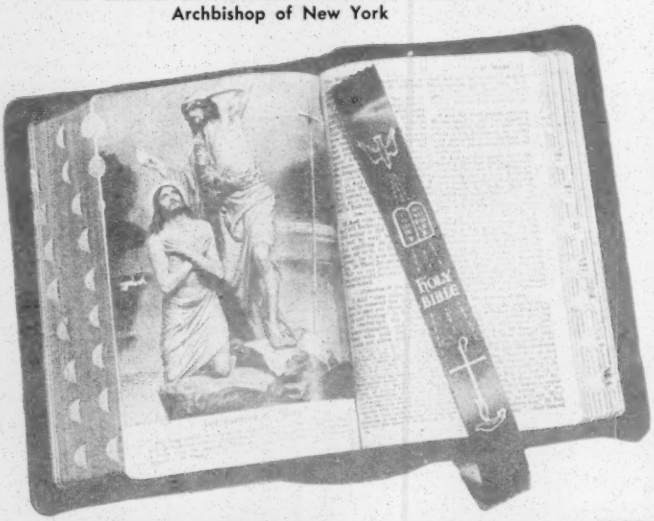

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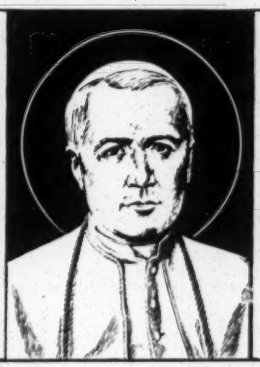

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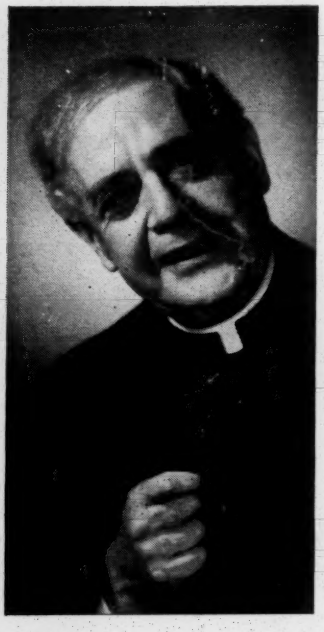

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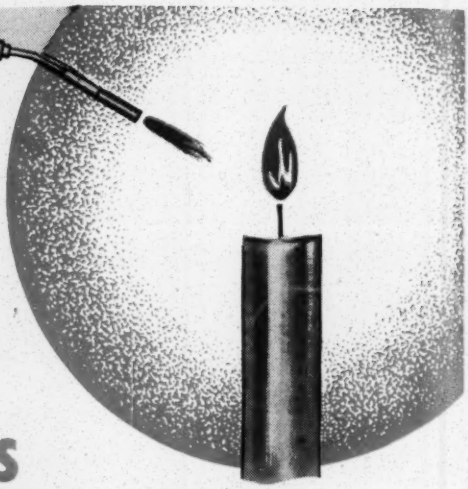

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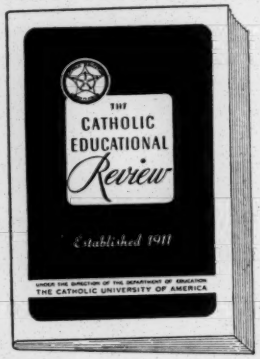

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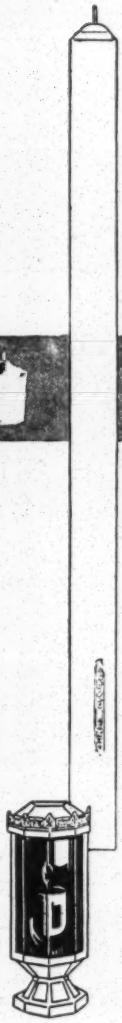

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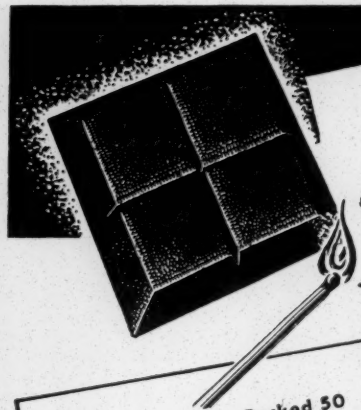

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